BRITISH PORTRAIT PAINTING

TO THE OPENING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

VOLUME II

FRONTISPIECE

SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE, P.R.A.

PORTRAIT OF MISS FARREN

(J. PIERPONT MORGAN, ESQ.)

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BY

M. H. SPIELMANN, F.S.A.

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BRITISH PORTRAIT PAINTING

CHAPTER V

FROM HENRY MORLAND TO JOSEPH WRIGHT OF DERBY

ALTHOUGH Reynolds and Gainsborough had introduced a new note into English art—the note of elegance and natural grace in arrangement, figure, attitude, and colour which was received from abroad, and which was to become a tradition in the British school—there still remained a line of artists who followed with national tenacity the old British feeling of which Hogarth was the great exemplar. It was a sentiment handed on from father to son, from teacher to pupil, who were slow to accept and adopt the new spirit however much they might admire it, and whose nature and sentiment, perhaps, revolted against the new order, even were they capable of being touched and inspired by its influence. They rejected the Revelation; and the opposition to it, or the incapacity for appreciation and imitation, were slow to die out. All change is gradual, especially in respect of contemporary example; but as time went on painters were forced to acknowledge, and make an effort to practise, what the public, or at least the patrons, had recognized in a flash; and naturalism, or what passed as such, took the place of the more stilted artificiality that infected the original main current of English portraiture.

We have an example of this slow development in the Morlands, grandfather, father, and son. As to the works of the first two there is considerable confusion. To George Henry Morland are frequently attributed such pictures

as "The Letter Woman" and "The Oyster Girl" shown beside a lantern —night-pieces with strong effects of illumination, in the manner of Gerard Dou and Godfried Schalcken. But it should be noted that these same subjects were shown also by Henry Robert Morland almost *ad nauseam* at the exhibitions of the Society of Artists and the Free Society, and were even repeated as to certain of them by the younger George. They were well enough done in their way, rather heavy but Hogarthian in feeling, and very strong and Caravaggiesque in light and shade—or rather light and shadow. They are still esteemed for the mezzotints of them scraped by Philip Dawe, who, it will be remembered, was the apprentice of Henry Robert, George Henry's son, and who became the father of George Dawe, R.A., the biographer of the third and by far the most illustrious of the Morland line, George.

Henry Robert Morland

Henry Robert Morland was a man of many parts and at one time was well-to-do, occupying the large house in Leicester Fields which, soon after he had fallen on evil times, came into the possession of Reynolds. Morland is known for his two portraits of King George III, one of which was engraved by Richard Houston. The earlier of the two was painted in 1767 and in the exhibition was priced at ten guineas; the second appeared seven years later and was probably a copy of the first—the painter being an incorrigible repetitionist; neither is likely to have been done from sittings. In the reference books he is often spoken of as the painter of the portrait of "Garrick as Richard III" in the possession of the Garrick Club. This, however, is a mistake; the picture is a clever copy of that by Nathaniel Dance, R.A. (afterwards Sir Nathaniel Dance-Holland, Bart.), which was exhibited at the Royal Academy under its true author's name in 1771. Morland's frequent repetitions of "The Oyster Girl" and "The Letter Woman" (or post-mistress) proves the popularity of the subjects: the former were exhibited 1769, 1776, and 1783, and the latter in 1765, 1767, 1768, 1776, and 1782. "The Ballad Singer," too, was seen in 1759, 1767, 1768, and 1774, and yet once again under the name of "Mr. Morland junior," otherwise George Morland. Of his son George he painted an excellent likeness, but with the exaggerated illumination of "The Oyster Girl."

Henry Robert is best known for his fancy-portraits—for which ladies of fashion would sometimes sit—in the character of laundry maids. Of these not fewer than thirteen—with slight variations in costume and occupation—appeared in the exhibitions. The best-known examples are those in the National Gallery, pictures of high finish and a certain pretty grace, to which all the more solid qualities of the portrait-painter's art are ruthlessly sacrificed. These two pictures of "A lady's maid soaping some fine linen" and "A lady's maid ironing some sleeves," as they were entered in the catalogues, were

"The Laundry Maid" Plate 66

formerly owned by the Earl of Mansfield, and were believed to represent the two Misses Gunning, the famous beauties of George III's Court when they had become Duchess of Hamilton and Countess of Coventry respectively. But a comparison with authentic portraits of the two ladies proves the assumption to be erroneous. That these two pictures achieved considerable success may be gathered from their numerous replicas or variants, and from the fact that one of them—that attributed to the collaboration of Henry Robert and his son George—was acquired for Mr. Pierpont Morgan's collection in 1897 at the price of 3,250 guineas. This picture, painted in 1782, is so superior to the others, especially in the head, that we may attribute the entire authorship to George Morland, to whom, indeed, in one edition of the Royal Academy catalogue, it is ascribed. The painter was ruined by his devotion to pastel, which led him to a softness and delicacy that did not rise above neatness and, in spite of undoubted refinement, degenerated into weakness and tameness.

Johann Zoffany

Although born at Ratisbon, and of Bavarian descent, Johann Zoffany is here classed among the British portrait painters, inasmuch as his life-work was wholly accomplished in the country of his adoption, as well as in India where he stayed for a period of seven years. He is the exception here admitted, because not only did he not remain an exotic, but he identified himself with English life, especially with the theatrical side of it, as well as with British portraiture. To omit him, therefore, would be to leave a hiatus that would detract from the completeness of this review.

To the very end he retained, more or less, the characteristic deftness of handling which he had acquired by his early training and seldom allowed his love of clear delineation and precise detail to yield to the broad decorative convention which placed its impress on portraiture as practised in England in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Zoffany certainly carried the dying fashion of the family portrait-group conceived as a conversation-piece—a naturalization of the row of figures as affected by Gonzales Coques—into the early years of the nineteenth century. It was on the small scale prescribed by this kind of composition that the qualities of his painstaking and conscientious art showed to the greatest advantage, nowhere perhaps better than in the exquisitely wrought "Family of John Peyton, fourteenth Baron Willoughby de Broke." In this, the minutely rendered still-life of the tea-table is not less remarkable than the actual portraiture. Almost Pre-Raphaelitic in treatment is the excellent conversation-piece containing a group of fifteen naturally disposed members of the Sharp family on a yacht on the Thames at Fulham. Zoffany's love of still-life, natural enough in so objective a painter is very apparent in what is sometimes spoken of as his masterpiece, the "Portrait of Charles Townley, the Collector, in his Library, with his Marbles," belonging to Lord

"The Minuet" Plate 67

O'Hagan. In the more broadly executed picture, "The Minuet," now at Glasgow, it is interesting to note that none of the artist's characteristic conscientiousness of portraiture has been sacrificed to the genre-like conception of this family group. Indeed, if any objection is to be raised, it is that the man on the right, presumably the father of the two children—posed cross-legged according to the fashionable stereotyped convention which, as we have seen, Gainsborough so much affected—is treated too much as an unattached personage (like Gainsborough's Mr. Baillie in "The Baillie Family") and appears insufficiently interested in the proceedings of the scene. Indeed, only the flautist and the boy dancer seem directly and intelligently alive to what is going forward. In such pictures his backgrounds are usually admirable and add to the verisimilitude of the scene; whether they consist of interiors or of landscape or of stage "sets" they are always treated as equal in importance to the figures. Of Zoffany's portraiture on a larger scale, it would be difficult to find a better example than the half-length known as a "Portrait of James Quin" formerly in Sir Cuthbert Quilter's collection. The identity of the sitter, however, may well be doubted because if, as here appears, the eminent actor was about forty years old, it establishes it as belonging to the year 1773, the year in which Zoffany was born. In any case, it is a fine and characteristic piece. Zoffany enjoyed considerable patronage at the hands of actors. He is known to have painted at least eight portraits of David Garrick in different characters, as well as many other celebrities of the contemporary stage, more than a dozen of which—for the most part in scenes from popular and memorable plays—are in the admirable collection in the Garrick Club. From time to time, Zoffany was also employed by "the quality." His portrait of "Queen Charlotte, Queen of George III," and that of "The Earl of Sandwich" were both successful productions the mezzotints of which are well-known to collectors. Perhaps his most celebrated picture is "Colonel Mordaunt's Cock Match at Lucknow" (1786) in which, among the distinguished personages, British and Indian, Zoffany has introduced his own portrait.

(?) "James Quin" Plate 68

Nathaniel Dance, R.A. (Sir Nathaniel Dance-Holland, Bart.)

It seems strange to us, enabled as we are at this distance of time to take into truer perspective the relative merits of painters, that in his own day Nathaniel Dance, R.A., should have had supporters who championed his claim to be considered on a level with and beside Sir Joshua Reynolds. If contemporary critics are to be believed, Dance's colour, especially in his historical pictures, rivalled that of Reynolds for richness and beauty; but so far as I am aware no such example has come down to us. As a painter he is difficult to judge, for he changed his manner, which was never very individual, from time to time; so that at one moment he reminds us of his teacher Hayman, or of Hogarth; at another, of Reynolds; and at another—especially

in his later period—of the Italians under whom or under whose influence he had studied. There is in the National Portrait Gallery an excellent portrait, in the Reynolds style, of Arthur Murphy, the actor and dramatic author, which in 1830 was sold at auction for no more than fifteen pounds; and there is also a capitally presented three-quarter length of the Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Camden, admirable not only in draughtsmanship but in character. There is more of himself in his "Garrick as Richard III" of which the excellent copy, already mentioned, by Henry Morland, hangs in the Garrick Club. His fine whole-lengths of King George III and his Queen, which were shown in the first exhibition of the Royal Academy in 1769, prove that he could rise to an occasion and that he could reach all but the greatest heights. It is difficult to name any except Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Romney who could paint a better, a more workmanlike and life-like, portrait than Dance, for he was not only a good craftsman, but he had taste. His portrait of "Mrs. Wheeler," belonging to Lord Gwydyr, prim and precise and tight as it is, is as acute a study of old age as you can see anywhere. The painting of the face is of real mastery. Dance had sympathy, too, with young people, as we learn from his group of "Lord Apsley and his brother, Apsley Bathurst," the elder lad in a plum-coloured coat and the other in green, standing in a landscape painted with exceptional care, charmingly posed and solidly painted. But here, as in so many of his portraits, the face-shadows are too dark, and detract seriously from the effect of what is otherwise a highly attractive group. In this class of picture Dance was very happy. There is another picture by him in the possession of Lord Balcarres, representing "Henry Duncombe, of Copgrove, Yorks" a small full-length, similarly standing beneath a tree, facing the spectator. It has been seen once or twice in public exhibitions and shown under the name of Zoffany, to whose style of art Dance's sometimes approximates. We recognize the similarity, too, in the portrait of "Frederick Cornwallis, Archbishop of Canterbury," which is rather too hard and over-accentuated in the modelling and over-strong in the shadows. But when he passed out of this phase and sought for nature rather than for conventional force of statement, and when he became more completely master of his material, Dance could claim occasional comparison with Reynolds, whose name, indeed, is attached nowadays to not a few of the finest portraits by Dance, for they are distinguished by such excellence of colour, ease of arrangement, good draughtsmanship, and well-defined character as to excuse, or at least to explain, the confusion. Perhaps his best work is the "Earl of Coventry," but the portrait of "Lord Chancellor Bathurst"—a fine full-length in his robes of office—runs it close. The artist, who was not without originality, always seems to be overlapping on someone else's reputation, and for that reason his work,

in spite of its merit, is of no real historical importance in the development of British painting. When, therefore, after a hopeless and unrequited passion for Angelica Kauffmann he comforted himself by marrying an excellent widow with a large fortune, Mrs. Dummer, and becoming a country gentleman much in the public eye, representing his division in Parliament and blossoming into Sir Nathaniel Dance-Holland, Baronet, he resigned his membership of the Royal Academy to which he had been elected on its foundation, it was felt that the institution could bear the loss without serious inconvenience. That was in 1790; but for a few years he sent in landscapes as an "honorary exhibitor." Dance, therefore, is a characteristic example of the rank and file of British painters of the day who did little that was memorable but much that was respectable and sometimes excellent. That he laid down his brush, as certain others have done, the moment that fortune allowed him the opportunity, shows it was necessity and not a love of art that had guided his hand and shaped his career as a painter. It was otherwise with George Romney.

George Romney

As regards public esteem the lot of Romney has been a strange one, in so far that it has been a chapter of vicissitudes without equal in the history of the artists of England. Frans Hals is perhaps the one foreign name whose fortunes have varied to a similar extent. Highly valued in his life-time beyond his merits as a painter, as soon as he died he fell into such disrepute, or at least into such neglect, that the most insignificant prices were paid for his works. Indeed, at his death sale in 1807, his unsold pictures fell to bids so "monstrous small" that the auction might almost be called a free distribution. His "Mrs. Robinson, 'Perdita,'" now in the Wallace Collection, is said to have fetched no more than sixteen shillings, and his "Mrs. Gunning" half-a-guinea; and while his "Lady Hamilton as Cassandra," stated in Redford's "Art Sales"—a transcript of Christie's catalogues—to be the great life-size whole-length, but by a biographer a head only, went for as much as eight guineas, the portrait of "Henderson, as Macbeth," now in the Garrick Club, was knocked down for three guineas, and the portrait of Tickell, the poet, for only seven shillings.

Little apology need be made for introducing the test of the market; for the auction-room affords the truest gauge of public appreciation. Let us continue the inquiry for a moment in order to show how from suffering undeserved contempt Romney has been raised to a pitch of equally undeserved appreciation, an appreciation not only exaggerated but from the point of view of art frankly absurd. It is absurd because the prices now given for his pictures are based not upon the excellence of the art in them but for the prettiness, charm, and frequent beauty of the sitters and the manner of their presentation. The matter of "quality" and painter-like ability are totally banished from consideration. The reasons for this judgment will be given presently; for the

moment let us glance at the advancing prices that illustrate the infatuation of collectors. For fifty years after Romney's death values fluctuated considerably, only once reaching as much as two hundred pounds; until, in 1860 a sensation was caused by "Lady Hamilton as St. Cecilia" fetching £470. This was the first indication of the upward rise which in a few years' time set in apace. Nine years later Lord Normanton bought "Lady Hamilton at the Spinning-Wheel" for £808. In 1882 "Miss Benedetta Ramus" was purchased for £1,386, and in 1890 the picture described as "Lady Hamilton as a Welsh Girl"—(these pictures of Lady Hamilton have been accorded all sorts of unauthorized and confusing titles)—was knocked down to Mr. Wertheimer for £2,990. In that same year the lovely group of "Mrs. Stables and her Children" was lent to the Royal Academy exhibition of Old Masters, when the owner, Mrs. Addison, on being asked its value for the purpose of insurance, modestly named fifty pounds—such was still the general opinion, or the general ignorance, of the market-value of Romney's pictures. The picture, however, soon changed hands for thousands. Two years after this incident the portrait of "Lady Augusta Murray" was sold at Christie's for just upon £4,000, and in 1896 the group portrait of the "Viscountess Clifden and Lady Elizabeth Spencer," the one playing on a harp and the other drawing, fetched £10,500. It was a tremendous bound, but that it was not unjustified by the taste of the day was proved in 1902 when the same sum—a confirmation, it seemed, of a "top-price" for Romney—was bid for the full-length "Portrait of a Young Lady" unnamed, but soon identified as Miss Rodbard, who afterwards became Lady Coote. Only three years later the picture of "Lady Hamilton as 'Nature'" nearly doubled this enormous price in the £20,000 it fetched—the largest sum which at that time had ever been paid for the work of a British painter. And we are left wondering when and where this rage will stop, and what is the cause of a craze unjustified by the inherent pictorial qualities and intrinsic value of the work. It is equally unjustified by any commercial consideration of rarity. A section of the collectors will run after a beautiful woman of paint, independently of the true claims of art, as in life men will sacrifice themselves for a beautiful woman of flesh and blood, independently of the true feminine qualities, and unhesitatingly vie with one another in squandering their money in order to possess her. This sounds like cheap moralizing, but it is simple fact; and when we reflect that the utmost that Romney ever received for a portrait was a hundred and twenty-six guineas, we may be excused, in the face of these colossal and wholly illogical prices, for giving a thought to the motive that inspires an appreciation out of all relation to artistic merit.

In Romney's own day the poets Hayley and Cunningham had diligently

applied their muse to quicken their friend's reputation and to fan the flame of his popularity just as the redoubtable Lord Chancellor Thurlow helped him with society, maintaining that the town was divided between Reynolds and Romney and declared himself of the Romney faction. To this rivalry obtrusively forced upon him Reynolds, conscious of course of Romney's real merits (and no doubt he set them at their proper height, which was considerable), paid little open heed even when Romney became so much the fashion that his own portrait-sitters considerably diminished in numbers. But persistent poetry with a purpose, in the shape of Epistles, Odes, and Sonnets, addressed to a living painter counted for something in those days, and many no doubt were spurred to appreciation by them, especially by Cumberland's verses of public rebuke (with the object of hurting Reynolds *en passant*) which he published in the "Public Advertiser" in 1776, the concluding lines of which may be quoted:

> "An undistinguished candidate for fame,
> At once his country's glory and its shame.
> Rouse then at length, with honest pride inspired;
> *Romney*, advance! be known and be admired."

Half a century later Croker, in his "Boswell's Johnson," expressed some wonder that Ramsay should at one time have been compared with Reynolds, and that Hayley should have "dedicated his lyre (such as it was) to Romney. What is a picture by Ramsay or Romney now worth?" Here we have evidence, if such be needed, of Romney's early fall. Lord Ronald Sutherland Gower tells us how, less than half a century ago, the portraits of Romney—not a few of them of families allied with his own—were practically disregarded as works of art at all, and how even what is in some respects considered as the painter's masterpiece, conveniently known as "The Gower Children," was cared for only for the sake of the portraits. If Romney has nowadays risen to heights previously unscaled it is not through Hayley's insistent muse—(he published his volume of "Poetical Epistles to Romney" in 1778)—but through a fashionable *béguin*, as the French call it, an infatuation which has carried him far beyond his mark and which, by a future swing of the pendulum of natural re-action, will inevitably land him once more in a position below his deserts. It will be the case of Carlo Dolci, and even of Guido Reni, once again. There is no need to offer excuse for having dwelt at some length on the question of present-day esteem for Romney's art, for it is necessary to take note of it, if not to account for it, if we would seek to the best of our ability to strike the true balance in this Survey of our national school of portrait-painting.

Romney, no doubt, was a genius, an exceptional genius endowed with rare gifts and an enchanting power of seeing beauty and presenting it to us in

its most alluring aspect; but whose genius was insufficient to make of ugly and uninteresting persons noble works of art, as Gainsborough and Reynolds could, and whose intellectuality fell short when it became a matter of sustained power and technical artistry. What then is his true position? To answer the question we should clear the ground by first dealing with Romney's defects and shortcomings before dwelling upon those fine qualities and alluring endowments which delight and often captivate us even when we are most sensible of the painter's weakness. We are now considering him, it should be remembered, as a portraitist—that is to say on his stronger side; his chief failure is manifest in what was called "history-painting," in which alone it was his ambition to shine.

It is not without reason that Romney's shortcomings challenge us even more forcibly than his outstanding merits. All painters have produced bad pictures, but with very different results. Romney is damned by his bad pictures: Reynolds and Gainsborough are forgiven theirs for the sake of their successes. Romney's triumphs do not plead for him in quite the same way. This is because the other masters failed in spite of their knowledge and their genius; Romney, with all his genius, failed because of his relative ignorance—ignorance of the fundamentals quite apart from his illiteracy. As his mind was untrained by lack of general education, so was he untrained in matters technical—that is to say, constructional—and it is further matter for doubt whether, even had he had the benefit of the good fortune that others have enjoyed, and his genius was of such a kind and his natural powers sufficient, he would have responded as Reynolds did to the opportunities afforded him. However that may be, Romney's inherent weakness always springs to the eye and mind of the discerning spectator; we cannot escape it, and with the best will in the world, we cannot forgive it. G. F. Watts, in conversation with me, once put the matter pointedly: "As to 'suggestion,'" he said, "compare the hands in Sir Joshua Reynolds's 'Lord Heathfield' with those of one of Romney's 'Lady Hamiltons'; Reynolds, perfect in living suggestion—the insistence on the knuckles not being required, and therefore incomplete; Romney flashy, because the artist was an ignorant man." Romney, he declared on another occasion, "had no backbone; he is absurdly over-rated at the present day and the vogue, which is quite a mistake, cannot last—at least among true connoisseurs and wise critics." And Millais, once writing to me about Romney, characterized him as "shoddy." Watts had special reason to understand the technique of Romney for he had copied one of his best pictures, the "Duchess-Countess of Sutherland," which admirable reproduction now belongs to the Duke of Westminster.

At the root of Romney's weakness, then, was the absence of artistic

education. His brief apprenticeship with young Edward, otherwise Christopher, Steele of Kendal, but four years Romney's senior, and a painter of little or no importance, afforded him the only instruction he received. The result was that he had no adequate knowledge of anatomy and his draughtsmanship was frequently very deficient. The numerous commissions for portraits he succeeded in obtaining almost from the beginning but at small prices spurred him to cultivate the rapidity he quickly achieved, and this facility gave birth to boldness that often became carelessness, with the natural result of an absence of "quality"—the chief essential in painting. Features and main constructional forms he could obtain by a sweep of the brush as summary as Manet's, but more unsatisfactory because there was little of a thinking purpose behind. Romney recognized them on the surface, but knowing little, gives nothing of "the within."

For this double reason, insufficiency of knowledge and poverty of intellect, Romney betrays a great want of individuality in his painting of heads. A curious sameness of manner vitiates them in the aggregate, although some escape the reproach; but, generally speaking, eyes, eyebrows, noses, nostrils, lips, and ears are all put in in the same way as if by a Medean recipe, and there is no variety such as we see in the heads of all the great masters. In part, no doubt, this is due to the fact that to a painter in full and pressing practice a formula is necessary if he is to get through the work that crowds in upon him. But Romney seems to have learned or constructed an artistic shorthand, or *cliché*, at the opening of his career and to have adhered to it to the end. While Reynolds spent his life in experiment, always seeking to improve and realize new beauties, Romney stuck to the manner he originally evolved, and was either too satisfied with it, or too timid to attempt any departure. The result is that after a strangely rapid acquisition of a mastery of technique, he displays no development; his pictures whether good or bad, are all on the same technical scale of knowledge, and he too often impresses us with a sense of the common-place, especially when we see many of his works together. The faces of Gainsborough frequently appear "thin," but they are never empty: Romney's not seldom are both thin and empty even when the character is well realized. The effect, therefore, is not only merely facility, but "cheapness."

Similarly as to colour. His flesh-tints are fresh and charming when he is in the mood; but how often do we find, mainly in the draperies, that his colour is not glowing, as in his best works, but dull and opaque?—and, what is more, frequently hot, though rarely unpleasant? We are reminded of Hoppner's verdict upon it: "In Titian every tint is broken and mysterious, while Romney's palette may readily be traced back to the colour-shop." In

fact, Romney tinted as much as he painted, and what with his frequent despondency and what with his artistic anaemia, his colour would become heavy and coarse, with little refinement, and reveal little or none of that "feeling" which betokens the true painter. After having gazed upon a score of pictures all dull pink, or red, or brown, or white, with pinky flesh in women's faces or bricky in the men's, laid on with a wearisome sameness of touch, we are startled every now and then, and roused to enthusiasm and to gratitude, as we come across a fine rich canvas, glowing with colour, that deserves to be called great. How is it that such a man could be competent of the occasional masterpiece? and how could the painter of the masterpiece be guilty of so many faults and so many failures?

The puzzle is all the greater when we come to composition and recognize Romney's law of limitations. He has given us two or three ambitious subject-pictures admirable in arrangement, line, and rhythm; but the majority are poor, some downright bad, stilted, and empty. See the portrait group of "Adam Walker and his family"—(Adam Walker, a distinguished man of science, was his life-long friend)—with its deplorable arrangement of the figures, starved in conception and childish in its irresponsibility. Or "Newton displaying the Prism"—in which the philosopher, much resembling Romney's portrait of Cowper, is a fine dramatic figure, while the daughters are poorly imagined, and the great diagonal beam of light of which the later eighteenth-century and earlier nineteenth-century "history-painters" were frequently so fond, produces a cheap and empty effect, destroying all sense of breadth, and bringing to nought the variety introduced by the three heads being placed in full light and shadow. Even more strongly is this evident in "Milton dictating to his Daughters," which besides being stilted is forced in its "classic" arrangement so as to suggest kinship with his young contemporary, the Frenchman David. The fault, no doubt, was sometimes but indirectly his, for of the Walker group, we know, he finished only the heads, calmly leaving it to his friend's discretion to procure a drapery painter to complete the figures and paint in the sitter's clothes. Again in the otherwise charming "Daughters of Lord Malmesbury," the handsome young women, designed in Romney's "classic" manner, are crowded into the left half of the picture. And of his several Shakespeare pictures that at Petworth is the only one which is tolerable in composition.

Limitations such as these naturally beget repetition and mannerism. How often does Romney, like some of his contemporaries, it is true, set his ladies, sometimes eight or nine heads high, in a landscape leaning on a pedestal? The landscape background is passable as background mainly because there is usually so little of it made out; yet the colour is good and the figure comes well

against it and composes well into it. Among them is "Caroline, Duchess of Marlborough" and the "Miss Rodbard" of 1784, (with her little dog on the top of the pedestal—a pretty conceit); there are the two brilliant pictures, "Lady Beauchamp-Proctor," one of the painter's completest things—and the lovely "Mrs. Maxwell" of 1781; there are the imposing "Mrs. Eleanor Townley Ward," the graceful "Lady Isabella Hamilton," "The Countess of Westmorland," "Lady Newdigate," and "Miss Frances Woodley" (afterwards Mrs. Banks), and I know not how many more besides. And then there is the very numerous group of ladies' portraits in which the sitters are attired in white, relieved only by a coloured waistband or a coloured ribbon in the hair or in the hat, when such is worn; and they include some of the most popular, and indeed some of the most admirable, of Romney's female portraits. But then when once the thing was successfully done by the painter, repetition was easy.

"Lady Beauchamp-Proctor" Plate 70

And how Romney makes his ladies work with their knees and their elbows! In these cases more often than not his sitters are seen in profile. The knees are generally brought up sharply to a level with the hips, and the acute angle gives a piquant air which, however, becomes tiresome by reiteration. If we recall "Serena reading" (the one of the several Serenas which Stothard appropriated so unconscionably for his frontispiece to "The Triumphs of Temper"), "Mrs. Stables and her Daughters," "Lady Hamilton as 'Contemplation'" and as "Cecilia," "Lady Stormont," better known as "Lady Mansfield," we recognize at once a pose which is peculiar to the painter himself. This angularity is even more insisted on in the leaning arm and seems to form the motive of not a few of the artist's pictures. There are the three at least of the portraits of Lady Hamilton, one of them in the National Portrait Gallery; we see it noticeably in the attitude of Mrs. Walker in the family-picture which has been named; in "Lady Antrobus," "The Countess of Derby," the delightful "Mrs. Russell and her Son," and many more.

Not merely in attitude but in sentiment would Romney labour his pictorial idea not only beyond prudence but beyond sincerity. Here he takes his stand beside Greuze for artificiality, but he has it in his favour that he is always as pure and refined in realization as he is in intention. But look at his numerous portraits of Lady Hamilton—as "Miranda," as "Sensibility," as "St. Cecilia," as "Cassandra," as "Circe," look at "Mrs. Tickell" and a score of others, and you will find that they are all acting, just as the painter is—all the while delicate, sweet, tender, and the very pink of propriety, but all of them, almost without exception, as utterly divorced from truth of sentiment as they are from naturalness. When Romney took Emma Lyon simply as a model, she inspired him to all those lovely conceptions of unreality for which Sir Thomas Lawrence expressed so great a contempt; but when he regarded her

as a sitter, he inspired himself to far greater work, as we see in the portrait of her, after her marriage with Sir William Hamilton, which he called "The Ambassadress." Here she is no longer the model—she is a woman of fashion and of refinement dressed in admirably reticent taste for visiting; and the picture is as sincere, although of course it is not to be compared with it either as to painting or design, as Gainsborough's "Mrs. Siddons." This picture, like that of the same sitter "in a Morning Hat," belonging to Mr. Alfred de Rothschild, declares, as eloquently as paint can speak, that Emma Hart Lyon Hamilton is a lady, and Romney is a gentleman, if not in this instance a great artist. No wonder that the impressionable painter was inspired by her; for in type, in feature, and in form she is said to have been one of the most perfectly beautiful women that ever lived—"finer than the Greek because she was alive." Phryne herself could not surpass her, and Helen would have regarded her with envy.

Against all these deficiencies in his art, which shut him out inevitably from that front rank to which his blinder admirers would advance him, there must be credited to Romney merits so solid and important that they have not hindered his popularity, and scarce lost him the regard of the true connoisseur. His few and simple tints are managed with great discretion and effect; indeed, we occasionally see a whole picture painted in only reds and whites and do not feel the loss of other colours. His drawing is often vigorous and accomplished, the result of intuition rather than study, for he, as has been said, practically a self-taught man in so far as he was taught at all, had little opportunity of drawing, properly understood, under the peripatetic Steele. In his freer painting his brush-work is seen to be extremely broad, less like that of Reynolds than that of Opie who, follower though he was of the former, must have adopted the handling of him whom they sniffed at as "the man in Cavendish Square." It is curious that for a long time one of Romney's best groups, "Jane, Duchess of Gordon and her son, the Marquess of Huntly" was generally thought to be by Sir Joshua, and some years ago was actually exhibited at the Old Masters Exhibition of the Royal Academy under his name. Romney's heads, in spite of the frequent monotony already spoken of, were conceived with intellectual grasp when they interested the painter, and on such occasions may be said to have raised him to the point of greatness. But when he had done the heads Romney would often regard the picture as finished—or rather, would regard them as the picture, and would treat the rest as a surrounding accessory. It seems as if he recalled Hudson's advice: "Remember—think of your figure as a candlestick and candle, and let the head be the flame." But a great man or a beautiful woman would bring out the best that was in him, and where greatness and beauty were allied in one person, the artist in him would ignite and an extremely fine thing would

result. On such occasions Romney would become not only a skilful but an original portrait-painter, and his natural taste—one of his best and most enduring qualities in portraiture—would select a good pose and place the sitter against a well-chosen background; to the importance of this he was thoroughly alive. A pretty woman was perhaps safer in his hands than in those of either Reynolds or Gainsborough, for his unfailing power to render pretty eyes, to lend a bewitching arch smile, while retaining the sitter's refinement and dignity or even investing her with them if Nature had been unkind to her, always ensured a happy result; and, as Seguier points out, he would often secure an exquisite sense of repose by turning away the sitter's eyes or head. This we see in one of his finest works, "Mrs. Carwardine and Child"—one of his relatively few pictures of genuine healthy sentiment. Romney was, indeed, in a good sense, a master of stage effect when dealing with single figures or groups in portraiture as opposed to picture-making. An intellectual grasp allied to fine painting is proved here and there among his portraits; an example of such may be pointed to in the "Mrs. Holte," in Birmingham, which is so broadly and masterfully executed that although it is thin and simple it is not empty. The unfinished portrait of himself, as might be expected, shows equal grasp and greater character, for it is an honest picture of the outer man and of his temperament—his power and impulsiveness, his indecision and sensitiveness, his selfishness and his straightforwardness; in his eyes his hypochondria and his shallowness of thought, his poetic sensuality about the mouth, his weakness about the chin—just as he was in 1780: all these qualities we can plainly see in the head—after we have been told about them by his biographer.

"George Romney by Himself Plate 69

This was the man whose impulsiveness led him to marry an awkward country-girl; whose courage impelled him to come to London without prospects and after ten years to sacrifice the income of £1,200 he had arrived at, in order to go to Rome and other Italian cities to study, and on his return to force himself once more into the foremost rank of fashionable portrait-painters. So great were his energy, his industry, and his popularity that by the time that Reynolds retired Romney was making close on four thousand a year. He was now receiving twenty guineas for a head, thirty for a kit-cat (35 inches by 26), forty for a half-length (50 inches by 40) sixty for a "half whole-length" (that is to say, excluding the feet—62 inches by 50), and sixty for a full-length (93 inches by 57). Yet these top prices did not keep people from crowding to his studio, and he was so hard put to it that it is little wonder that he tired of portrait painting as Reynolds and Gainsborough had done before him. Unlike them, however, he felt little interest in the majority of his sitters, as his pictures plainly show; for he had not got it in him, as the others

had, to search out hidden character, nor had he the humour to find any fun in painting the stupidity of those who had none. The obvious he could paint and he delighted in, whether beauty or strongly marked character, but his lack of power to sustain an effort on which he had embarked with enthusiasm, often made him lose interest after the head or the drapery (whichever tickled him more) was completed. "This cursed portrait-painting," he wrote to his friend Hayley; "how I am shackled with it; I am determined to live frugally and cut it short as soon as I can." Yet he was an earnest as well as an ambitious man, kindly and charitable with a charity which did not exactly begin at home; and yet, although he had deserted the uncomplaining wife who still loved him while recognizing the blunder of their marriage, he would write affectionate letters and take a fatherly interest, *à la* Chesterfield, in his son's upbringing.

Hoppner, who showed himself a severe critic of Romney in the article in the "Quarterly" in which he reviewed Hayley's Life of the artist, declared that Romney's portraits of men were inspired by Kneller and those of women by Lely. The fact is that there is often greater resemblance to the portraiture of Michael Dahl—which is the more curious as we might have expected an art-descent from Van Loo under whom Steele had studied. Hoppner's dictum is rather difficult to follow except through an occasional resemblance to Lely which may be traced in some of the "semi-Greek" pictures as they have been called, of ladies. This quasi-classic or "semi-Greek" taste, which was by no means confined to Romney, being dictated in part by the *haut ton* fashions of the day, was much to Romney's liking; not merely because it gave him a good opportunity of displaying his unsurpassed ability in arranging and painting folds of some severity and admirable refinement, but because it fell in with a passion he seems to have conceived and indulged since his visit to Italy. On his journey to Rome, which he made with Ozias Humphry (of whose handsome face he made that brilliant and even noble profile portrait in half-length from which Valentine Green, in 1772, scraped one of his finest plates) he had copied a few of the Italian masters, notably Raphael's "Transfiguration," for which on his return the Duke of Richmond offered merely a hundred guineas—indignantly refused by Romney; and when the painter died it was knocked down for the sum of six guineas. This study affected him but little; what chiefly struck him was "the Antique." The feeling remained with him, and towards the end of his life we find him commissioning his friend Flaxman to purchase for him and send him home the finest casts that a hundred pounds would buy. So when he introduced his classic taste into modern portraiture, although he produced some of his finest things, the result, as Hoppner pointed out, was not so much living ladies as Greek sculpture, giving his sitters the appearance of coloured statues rather than of breathing

human beings. We find this classic spirit to some extent in the rather theatrical portraits of Lady Hamilton as "Circe" and "Cassandra"—the sweetest enchantress and least terrible or pathetic of prophetesses ever seen or dreamt of, as well as in a score of portraits such as the freezingly dignified "Lady Stormont" (afterwards Lady Mansfield) the design of which Romney admitted to have borrowed from a Greek gem; to some extent in the lovely portrait—exquisite and dignified yet true, if other pictures are to be relied upon—of "Caroline Gower, Countess of Carlisle;" in "Henrietta, Countess of Warwick," "Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland," "Lady Craven," and so forth; to say nothing of "Lady Hamilton as a Bacchante, with a Goat" and the rest of the series. Belonging to this category are two pictures here reproduced—"Lady Mary Beauchamp-Proctor," painted in 1788, and "The Countess of Derby," of ten years earlier. The former stands sadly against a high plinth which is decorated with a mournful relief, and behind her is one of the most effective of Romney's landscape backgrounds. Her figure is graceful, her attitude pathetic and unforced, and if the draperies are not composed with the painter's usual felicity they have the merit of thoroughly explaining the elegant forms beneath. It is curious how in this and so many other pictures Romney and his contemporaries seem anxious to suggest that the gardens of the nobility are always provided with pedestals in picturesque sequestered nooks for the pretty ladies of the family to attitudinize against. Quite as careful and more sincere in feeling is the portrait of Lady Betty Hamilton, the daughter of the celebrated Miss Elizabeth Gunning who had become the Duchess of Hamilton. Lady Betty was now Elizabeth, Countess of Derby, and her portrait, in which the figure is particularly well placed in the canvas (engraved in mezzotint by John Dean in 1780), suggests the simplicity and grace of the young lady who aroused the enthusiasm of James Boswell. The hair is peculiarly well painted, as was Romney's wont—slight but effective; and the landscape, although a little troublesome in its composition as a background, fits the figure well enough.

"Lady Beauchamp-Proctor" Plate 70

"The Countess of Derby" Plate 71

But if we would see Romney in his most classic mood, we must turn to two child groups. The first is the charming picture of "Catherine Mary and Thomas John Clavering" walking along on a windy day attended by two dogs, whose puppy the little girl is nursing. The curves of her flying pink scarf which, with her figure, make a complete letter R, added to the design of a dress strongly and cleverly suggesting a singly caught-up chiton, is essentially classic in its lines, and to some extent in feeling. The graceful attitude of the boy, also in pink, assists the impression, and the picture, full of movement as it is, must be regarded as a highly successful solution of a difficult problem. It appears to have been painted about the year 1778; and it led up to a far

greater triumph a couple of years later—the work known as "The Gower Children" otherwise called "The Stafford Children"—the beautifully designed group of little dancers in the possession of the Duke of Sutherland. Here we have Romney's classicism in full blast, directly inspired as to style, one would think, from Guido Reni's "Aurora," and containing much of the manner of his contemporary Mengs, in the left-hand group of his "Mount Parnassus." It was not, of course, original with Romney. The taste for this sort of thing was in the air and others were dealing in it: "The Hours" by Maria Cosway, is a case in point. Every line in Romney's charming composition, almost without exception, is well ordered and expressive, whether of the children's bodies—so well indicated beneath the draperies—or of the elaborately designed draperies themselves. The drawing is excellent, the colouring good, and the action of each child dancing to the elder girl's tambourine is well individualized while subordinate to the whole. The colour-scheme is worthy of the rest; there is as much rhythmic movement in delightful *ronde* as in the angel-children of Donatello, and the classic formula adopted excuses, or rather justifies, the inevitable artificiality of the scene. These life-size portraits of Lady Anne Leveson-Gower (sister of the second Marquess of Stafford and first Duke of Sutherland, and of the beautiful Caroline, Countess of Carlisle) and of her step-sisters the Ladies Georgiana Augusta, Charlotte Sophia, and Susan Leveson-Gower, and Lord Granville Leveson-Gower, are playfully known by their descendants, Lord Ronald Sutherland Gower tells us (himself also a descendant), as "the dancing grandmothers."

The picture, for which, by the way, Romney charged only two hundred guineas, is to be reckoned among his chief masterpieces. It shows his interest in children, an interest which occasionally warmed into a tenderer sentiment. What could be prettier than "Mrs. Carwardine and Child" as she embraces her nestling baby? It was the first picture he painted after that visit to Italy which had warmed him with its humanizing influence while it chilled him with it classicism; what more genuine than the "Lady and Child" in the National Gallery? what more sympathetic than "Lady Warwick and her son and daughter"? what more sincere than "Mrs. Stables and her daughters"? what more spontaneous and original than "Mrs. Russell and her son" of 1782? The green-clad mother—whose husband was soon to be created a baronet—holds the blue sash of the little fellow who stands on the table and looks into the mirror wherein his face is seen—a pretty idea, developed in one of the most satisfactory of Romney's canvases; for in chiaroscuro it is as agreeable as in subject, treatment, and composition. In anyone of these there is more real humanity than in the whole collection of Emma Harts; and yet it cannot be said that Romney had half that understanding of children that

"Mrs. (Lady) Russell and her son" Plate 75

"Thomas Fane" Plate 77

appeals to us in the canvases of Reynolds and of Gainsborough. Even the portrait of "Thomas Fane"—a little fellow about four years old in a white low-necked frock, with a blue sash, and red shoes, leaning against a red arm-chair on a terrace open to a good sky with a Newfoundland dog before him—tells us nothing about the child, except that he is a pretty child who would make a pretty picture and that Romney himself knew and cared little more than that.

"John Walter Tempest" Plate 76

When, however, he comes to children of a later growth, to boys and girls whose intellects are ripening, the artist's interest is aroused. We see it in "Admiral Sir Joseph Sidney Yorke at the age of thirteen," as he stands by the sea-shore while the warships, moved by a prophetic spirit, are firing a salute; and we see it again in the group (finished in 1780) of "John Walter Tempest" standing beside his bare-backed pony. What matters it that by an absurd oversight of perspective the animal seems to be drinking from a little waterfall yards away? The figure, full of youthful dignity, asserts itself and arrests our attention. The lad's picturesqueness attracts us; we recognize his intelligence, his force of character, as we recognize the artistic ability whereby his solidly painted person stands out against the horse which, thanks to its colour, is made to serve as an equine background while yet remaining an inherent part of the design. In such work as this Romney is at his most serious and best. The design, executed about the year 1780, has made no special call upon his intellect and demanded no special effort. These were conditions that suited him to perfection, and he shows his appreciation in producing a fine thing.

"Mrs. Robinson ('Perdita')" Plate 74

This frankness of statement we see in another picture of the same period; the short half-length of "Mrs. 'Perdita' Robinson," now in the Wallace Collection, for which—although it was a celebrated picture engraved by John Raphael Smith—the Marquess of Hertford paid the sum of twenty guineas. The face is eminently characteristic of the painter's style, rather summarily constructed and not very accurate in its planes (note the position of the nearer eye in the head); but it is full of charm, and the poise of the head, the taste of the arrangement, and above all the personality of the woman, combine to form an able picture which convinces us of its sincerity. There is

"Lady Poulett" Plate 72

in it none of the conscious dignity and grace of the elegant "Lady Poulett" who sits half reclining, in stately ease, against a stone pedestal. Her white low-necked robe and flowered damask skirt—the counterpart of that in the "Countess of Derby"—are free from the formality of Romney's classic folds with their carefully explained forms which leave nothing to the imagination of the spectator. The whole pose of head and body and arms proclaim the *grande dame* without any affectation beyond that under which a woman of fashion will sometimes conceal—or should we say display—her breeding. The rest of

the picture is typical of Romney's tendency to treat his accessories with carelessness: the background is no doubt a sufficiency but the seat, or pedestal, whichever it may be, does not explain itself; for on its rounded form is a wreath carved as though on a flat surface the plane of which is horizontal to the eye. In such matters, however, we must not ask too much of the artist.

This picture has not the artlessness, the freshness, and the simplicity of such a portrait as "The Parson's Daughter"; but it has a sincerity quite foreign to the "Lady Hamilton as a Bacchante" which, like the last named, is in the National Gallery. How could we expect sincerity in such a crop of representations of Emma Hart "as she wasn't"?—as all sorts of heroines, muses, nymphs, and the like, of which over a score of coveted prints exist—prints some of which often fetch several times what was originally paid for the paintings. Except in the few pictures already named she is never herself, but just the actress assuming the characters suggested to her by the painter. She is never the personification, but only the amiable and half-understanding impersonation of these delightful myths—she is the adorable model, and nothing more. And yet Romney understood the art of realization so little, that one of his most affected portraits of the lady he entitled "Nature"! The "Bacchante," however, is specially valuable, for being but a sketch—dashed in with extraordinary brilliancy and force—we are enabled to see and to admire the artist's brushwork and the amazing freedom of his hand.

"Lady Hamilton as a Bacchante" Plate 73

In this example of technique, elementary though it is, the reader will realize the mastery to which Romney attained, as in the other plates he will recognize the tact with which he was plentifully endowed, in his art as in life. His morbid sensitiveness—his greatest affliction—was in a sense his sheet-anchor, for it controlled his art in the absence of proper education and training, as his conscious weakness of character held him in restraint in his conduct of life. It has been well said that knowing his work to lack subtlety and "preciousness" he wisely forebore to seek Academic honours, for that would have compelled him to exhibit his pictures on its walls where they would have challenged direct comparison with those of Reynolds and Gainsborough—a rivalry which, while his canvases were fresh and lacking the mellowing of time, they could hardly have borne with credit. But although standing on a lower plane Romney still has a charm and grace of his own, together with an appreciation of feminine beauty, which are entirely personal to himself and therefore not lightly to be esteemed.

In the painting of men he often reached considerable heights. In his full-length portrait of "Granville, second Earl Gower and first Marquess of Stafford" in his Garter robes, there is a splendour and stateliness allied to fine character and expression, that recall Reynolds himself. In the three-quarter

length of "George Granville, second Marquess of Stafford and first Duke of Sutherland" there is an authoritative grace, an elegance and simplicity almost worthy of Gainsborough: and a delightful touch of flattery besides. The austerity and power of the grim "Lord Chancellor Thurlow" is fairly well suggested in the full-length picture at Trentham; but it betrays a disappointing absence of conviction, and, moreover, the figure does not stand well. But in the heads of Burke, of Flaxman, of Southey, of Colonel Romney, of Edward Wortley Montagu, and others, we have evidence of a strong appreciation of character and vigour, but except in such masterly works as the portrait of Lord Bathurst's "Lt.-General Sir Archibald Campbell" and of "Boronzowa" —broad, subtle, strong, and in all respects so admirable that we might almost doubt Romney's authorship—we have equal evidence that the artist could not always divest himself of his own personality, so that a certain monotony is manifest when several are seen together. His three-quarter-length figure, too, of "Warren Hastings" is a fine study of harried old age. But the artist could not sustain the effort. It comes, therefore, to this, that able as Romney was as an all-round portraitist, it is essentially as a painter of women and boys that he triumphs. In spite of all his defects, which were many and grave, he has produced for us an amazing series of fine portraits throughout a career of industry—of industry pursued no doubt against the grain—which, with those of Reynolds and Gainsborough, practically complete for us the picture of English Society during the latter half of the eighteenth century; and that would be a priceless gift even had his genius failed to conquer the position in the world of art which it should deservedly occupy. With that position his admirers should be content, without seeking to lift him to a place beside others, higher still, to which he has no right.

The fact that Romney shrank from showing his pictures in the Royal Academy—indeed, from the very date of its opening he not only desisted from joining his brother-artists there but actually discontinued from his former practice of contributing to the Society of Artists and the Free Artists—and displayed them only in his own private exhibitions, kept his work and his progress to a great extent unknown to his fellow-craftsmen. His influence, therefore, could have been but very slight on his contemporaries. Nevertheless here and there we find traces of it. Joseph Wright "of Derby," who for many years carried on the tradition of his master Hudson, which he displayed in a long series of portraits that do little justice to his real ability, sometimes in his best work echoes the excellence of Romney. We find a very beautiful example of this influence in the graceful portrait of a boy, called "Edwin" (in the possession of the Earl of Crewe)—representing the lad in Beattie's "Minstrel,"

Joseph Wright of Derby

seated in a landscape; it is delightful alike in line, pose, and colour—a harmony in light brown—and excellent in the flesh tints. There is a fine breadth about the work that is captivating. If Wright had maintained this breadth and the strength, as well as the insight and quiet dignity, of his portrait of himself in the National Portrait Gallery, he might have been counted among the great ones of the British School of portraitists. He could have dispensed with the strong effects of light and shade (into the principles of which he made diligent research and practised better than Romney) as in his pictures of "Experiments with an Air Pump" in the National Gallery, and "The Orrery" at Derby, and in his less ambitious candle-light and fire-light subjects, and would have avoided the hard and stiff representations of men and women with which most people identify him. Of these we have one or two examples in the national possession, generally exhibiting a mechanical sameness and an unpleasant heaviness in the shadows, with lack of quality and indefiniteness of textures. But sometimes he would mount far above these. We see him trying his wings in this auto-portrait; and we see him in full flight in the large and important composition of three figures—"The Rev. D'Ewes Coke of Brookhill Hall, Derbyshire, Hannah Heywood his wife, and Daniel Coke, Esq. M.P." Mr. Coke, the kinsman of Mr. D'Ewes Coke, is seated at a table in the open, holding a drawing, while the parson and his wife are both pointing down the hill at the landscape below them. The whole is expressive both as to the portraiture and arrangement; the pyramidal composition is skilfully put together, the drawing and the draperies are admirable, and the colours well chosen to aid in distancing the figures. How this *motif* attracted Raeburn will be seen later on. We have here a distinct feeling of Romney, but nothing more; and we realize, as has been said, that in spite of the mass of his poorer work, that Wright might, had he sustained this level have reached very nearly to the front rank. But Wright was wayward in his art as in his ordering of his career; he resigned his Associateship of the Royal Academy in a fit of petulance, refused the full membership offered him, and passed the last twenty years of his life quietly in his native city.

"Joseph Wright" by Himself Plate 78

CHAPTER VI

FROM BENJAMIN WEST, P.R.A., TO SIR HENRY RAEBURN, R.A.

Benjamin West, P.R.A.

BENJAMIN WEST, who was of Quaker stock and was born in Pennsylvania, came to England in 1763. Although he had shown artistic ability at a very early age he did not enjoy the advantage of any competent professional training, yet by the time he was eighteen years old he had made such progress that he set up as a painter in Philadelphia, and subsequently in New York and met with considerable encouragement. Nevertheless, he determined to study the Old Masters, and so set out for Rome in 1760 armed with a letter to Mr. Robinson (afterwards Lord Grantham). His portrait he painted with so much success that a company of artists and connoisseurs who met and discussed it held it to be the work of Anton Rafael Mengs, as there was no one else in Rome whom they thought capable of producing so fine a work —least of all the new-comer, the young American Quaker. But West's ambition, after he had returned to London and settled there, led him to the painting of large historical, allegorical, and religious compositions which, clever and original as they were properly proclaimed to be, were beyond the range of his unimaginative and prosaic talent. Public approval of these works —especially of his breaking away from traditional convention and audaciously painting battle-pieces with modern soldiers in modern uniforms instead of in classic dress and armour—supplemented the active encouragement of King George III. Yet among his Royal commissions there were many portraits of the King, the Queen, and members of the Royal family. Some of the best known of these are comprised in the long series at Hampton Court, of which the most remarkable are the two Vandyck-like group-portraits "The Prince of Wales and the Duke of York" as youths in robes of the Garter, and the companion group of "The Duke of Clarence and the Duke of Kent." The former is the better of the two and is bravely composed and well presented; but capital as it is in its way it has not sufficient strength or insight to carry its painter into the

foremost rank. One of West's most important works and certainly the most ingenious, is the picture of "Queen Charlotte and her Thirteen Children." Well might a painter quail before such a commission, but West overcame the difficulty by representing the Queen in full state in the foreground, filling almost the whole width and height of the canvas, while her numerous progeny are to be discerned as a sort of accessory, a fluttering human background, in the garden beyond a curtain. The extent to which West was employed by King George may be gathered from the fact that during the years he was employed by that monarch he received from him more than £34,000; indeed, it was matter for considerable comment and murmured discontent that he was preferred by the King to Sir Joshua Reynolds, whom he succeeded as President of the Royal Academy in 1792. As a portrait-painter he could not, of course, aspire seriously to challenge equality with Reynolds. He was lacking in inspiration and strength, in fire and expression. The portrait-group of the artist's wife and child, in the collection of Mr. Castle Smith, is pleasing in linear rhythm, the design being well adapted to the circular shape; but while the colour—the green of the mother's robe against the cream of the child's—is quiet, judicious, and graceful, the actual painting is thin and lacking in quality. The picture shows a curious blending of eighteenth-century English taste with certain elements that are plainly derived from the study of Raphael's Madonnas in the Italian galleries. Indeed, it has in it much of Mengs during his Raphaelesque period. That West was inspired with admiration of his great exemplar is clear from the fact that he endowed his little son here represented with the name of Raphael. Among his finer male portraits is his likeness of himself painted for the Society of Dilettanti.

"Mrs. West and Child" Plate 79

John Singleton Copley

In the art of John Singleton Copley—even were the many examples he has left of portrait-painting pure and simple to be entirely disregarded—the historical genre is so closely connected with portraiture that such famous compositions as "The Death of Major Pierson," and "The Repulse and Defeat of the Spanish Floating Batteries at Gibraltar," now at the Guildhall Art Gallery, with the smaller version at the National Gallery, would come legitimately within the range of this survey. Copley, who was born in Boston, U.S.A., of English and Irish parentage, was practically self-trained, and acquired great fame as a portrait-painter in America long before he set out for Europe. As early as 1767 he wrote to his friend Captain Bruce: "I make as much as if I were a Raphael or a Correggio." Although Copley contributed to the Royal Academy, sending over his pictures from Boston, most of the early works which are accounted his best either remained in his native country or have returned thither. Copley himself used to say in his old age that he never surpassed in excellence the portrait of Colonel and Mrs. Lee which he painted in 1769.

He came to England in 1774 and settled in London in the following year and after a brief sojourn in Italy rose quickly to wide popularity and to academic rank, thanks in great measure to the assistance and encouragement extended by Benjamin West to his able compatriot. His colour was pleasing and few could approach him in "history," although he possessed little true artistic inspiration. In his historical scenes, by which he is best remembered, everything is based on cold, deliberate calculation; but he certainly cannot be denied high accomplishment and a certain impressive dignity. He followed Reynolds. His Gibraltar picture, a vast and on the whole a brilliantly successful concern, is a direct challenge to him in the central figure of Lord Heathfield (the finished study for whose head is in the National Portrait Gallery), which, with less of mastery, gives an impression of the bluff old war-dog hardly less effective than Reynolds's own. Like the President, too, he was a good deal of an impressionist and like Reynolds endeavoured to probe the secrets of the great Venetians' palette, without however attaining the sumptuous splendour and emotional intensity of their colour. One of his most deservedly famous portrait-groups is "The Death of the Earl of Chatham" in the old House of Lords, at the National Gallery. The title, of course, though striking is misleading. It should be "The Seizure of the Earl of Chatham" for the statesman did not die until a month afterwards. When the picture was exhibited 60,000 persons went to see it, and to identify the figures in it. For every one of the fifty-five heads in this composition is a portrait true to life, yet the general effect is not sacrificed to this preoccupation with portraiture, the picture being well planned and dramatic—a little too dramatic perhaps and, in respect to the costumes, compounding with truth for the sake of the appeal to the imagination. Copley painted the excellent group of himself, his wife, and family, which after the death of his son, Lord Lyndhurst, was acquired by the Boston collector, Mr. Amory, who also secured Copley's portrait of his half-brother, Henry Pelham—the picture with which, by an infraction of the rules, he made his *début* at the Incorporated Society of Artists. Non-members were not permitted to exhibit, but the proffered portrait was considered so excellent that the Society waived the rule and welcomed the picture to its walls. One of Copley's finest canvases is that of the three youngest daughters of King George III, at Buckingham Palace, a work in which his facility, composition, and vigour of draughtsmanship are well illustrated. But there was so much virility about the man that he seemed to be thrown away on female portraiture—battle-pieces and strong historical incidents, or at least the portraits of men of well-defined character, are what he was by nature called upon to paint.

Tilly Kettle

Not so strong, and yet not by any means timid or weak, Tilly Kettle produced a series of portraits the best of which are esteemed for their technical

quality rather than for their excellence as physiognomical studies. Even in his own day they must have been a little old-fashioned, with their solidity and their frequent touch of primness. His likeness of "William Cator," an officer in the East India Company's service, is quite an interesting example of his art, with such pronounced individuality—both his own and his sitter's—that we may well overlook a certain indecision in the drawing. He has been compared with the American Stuart, yet his work seems to be entirely English in character, well adapted in style for the portraits, theatrical and Indian, by which he is best known. He is interesting alike as a painter and as a survival; at the same time, he must be considered with respect, if only because his portrait of Warren Hastings in the National Portrait Gallery is good enough to have been long mistaken for a Reynolds.

Richard Cosway, R.A.

As Copley and Kettle were vigorous in temperament and handling, Richard Cosway was delicate and refined, yet not without such strength as was properly becoming to his dainty art. Unfortunately this delicacy of conception, which narrowly escaped effeminacy, was greatly to the detriment of his life-size oil portraits. As his work in this direction is relatively little known although it is plentiful enough, there are here reproduced, through the courtesy of the Earl of Radnor, two of the portrait groups at Longford Castle. When Cosway attempted the full-length portraits of men he was, as might be expected, lacking in force and character. One such portrait—the great full-length of "Jacob Pleydell-Bouverie, second Earl of Radnor," in his peer's robes—is irreproachable in drawing, in grace of attitude, and beauty of face, but thin in quality, empty and even flashy in effect, without concentration of light or even proper diffusion of it. The fact that the carving on the leg of the state chair against which the figure is posed attracts the eye from the head is a characteristic piece of evidence which tells its own tale. With boys Cosway is more successful. In the group, painted in 1805, of two picturesque lads "Lord George and Lord Charles Spencer" playing with armour, one is trying on a pot helmet, yet lifts it with the tips of his fingers as if it were a paper cap—for to use strength and to bring his muscles into play would be, in the artist's opinion, to detract from grace of movement and of form. It is as well drawn as a Lawrence, but the figures are not set far enough back, and they over-fill the canvas. There is far more vigour in "Jacob Pleydell-Bouverie, Earl of Radnor" playing with his dogs. The illumination is a little forced, too suggestive of the lime-light that falls upon the actor; and one wonders whence comes the light when the sky is so black and threatening, and the landscape so sombre. But the composition is good and the spirit of the whole sufficiently like that of Reynolds to justify the criticism that Cosway usually had the master in his mind when planning his portraits—all but those charming, freely-executed little lead-pencil figures,

"J. Pleydell-Bouverie, second Earl of Radnor" Plate 81

with the heads and sometimes the hands daintily touched in colour. The picture before us seems to be one of those in which Cosway adopted a technique—it would hardly be fair perhaps to call it a trick—by which he secured a texture and almost a quality suggestive of an old painting. The landscape background is here relatively unimportant in its detail but excellent for its purpose. Cosway, indeed, had considerable feeling for landscape as a setting for his figures and rarely failed in this respect. We have proof of it in the child picture of "William Viscount Folkestone and his sister Lady Mary Anne Pleydell-Bouverie." Apart from the distressing fact that the great tree trunk is narrower at its base than higher up, we have an excellent and expressive glimpse of nature brushed in with certainty of effect. The children are not so good, and owing to the equality of the values of both their dresses it is not easy at first sight, without disentangling them, to decide to which child belongs the lower half of the body on the right. Yet there is here a certain evidence of power in the background rarely revealed in Cosway's art and a pretty playfulness that are distinctive of the well-equipped miniaturist whose speciality is the painting of ladies and young girls.

"William, Viscount Folkestone and Lady Mary Anne Pleydell-Bouverie" Plate 80

In the eyes of some, Cosway is the greatest miniaturist that ever lived, rising to a height attained by neither predecessor nor successor. I do not share that opinion. In every quality that makes an artist great he is vastly the inferior of Samuel Cooper, and if his drawing be as firm and occasionally as perfect, it must be remembered that fine draughtsmanship is only one, and that not the highest of the virtues and merits of a portraitist. But even with that virtue Cosway cannot always be credited; indeed, it would not be difficult to point to many examples in which it is abominably bad. In character and expression and in the more solid qualities of beauty I believe him to be inferior to his rival George Engleheart. And yet in certain respects he was supreme —in delicacy of colour, in charm of accent, in daintiness and refinement. His light backgrounds, which he may be said to have invented, or introduced, afford reason for the very delicate tints in which he painted the costumes of ladies, and for that delightful transparency which we never see in his oil pictures. In these his colour is usually opaque, and the hands—which in his miniatures are perforce rarely introduced—are frequently coarse and ill-painted. The ladies of his miniatures, however beautiful their faces and figures may be, are usually represented as rather thoughtless and vapid creatures, and even when not insipid their brain-power seldom goes beyond a bright ladylike intelligence. Could the ladies of his day, the butterflies that fluttered about the Prince of Wales's court at Carlton House, have been quite so artless and simpering, so arch and dolly-minded as these? Perhaps; because Cosway would sometimes give us a lady of real mental vigour, with some intellectual meaning

in her sprightliness. One of the finest examples is the one I have selected from Mr. Pierpont Morgan's well-nigh peerless collection—unfinished, it is true, and awaiting final touches which probably would have spoiled it. This is the "Madame du Barry" Plate 82 (a) "Madame du Barry," one of the most sparkling, *spirituel* little portraits that ever was done by a painter of miniatures. It is the woman herself, her mind, her quickness of thought, her laughing face betraying her power of deadly repartee, that we have here, with all her woman's wit and her knowledge of men and of the world—a pocket biography no bigger than the palm of your hand. Beside this sketch every other, highly finished though it be, pales, so to speak, into intellectual nothingness. Pictorially admirable they may be, but they are pictures of women who convey nothing but their grace; this is the woman herself, thinking, speaking to you, bantering you. If there is another that can stand beside it I have still to see it. And, moreover, the modelling though without a single accent, is complete. For the rest, Cosway's "Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire" is admirable; so, too, is the portrait of "The Prince Regent" painted in 1772, and Cosway's portrait of himself as an old man—a very beautiful rendering of the approaching and invading senility which overpowered him. This creeping decay was sadly accompanied by megalomania allied to delusions of spiritualism and mysticism of the most pathetically pronounced type, compared with which Blake's "visions" appear but the almost common-place reflections of the every-day prophet.

These, of course, are mentioned but as examples among the vast number of Cosway's works, few of which are without some evidence of his extraordinary ability in the *rôle* he elected to fill. At the same time, we cannot look through a large collection of them without tiring of them—a fatigue modified by the recognition that there was that in Cosway's talent—distinction and piquant delicacy—that saved his art and his reputation from being swallowed up by his own too frequent namby-pambiness and his all-absorbing devotion to mere prettiness and empty charm.

Mrs. Maria Cosway That these qualities are to be found in the portraiture of Maria Cosway is natural and acceptable enough; for what is "prettiness" in a man's work often becomes charm in a woman's. Maria Hadfield was born and had been educated in Florence, and not until she was twenty years of age did she come to England and, in the course of a short time, marry Richard Cosway. The early success she achieved in Rome and Florence, she herself admitted, had been due in great measure to her youth and "novelty;" as a matter of fact, she had considerable talent and had profited by the instruction she had obtained in Italy, acting on the advice of the English artists who passed through—Wright of Derby and Fuseli among them. She retained a good deal of her Italian spirit of design—such as we see in her picture of "The Hours," well

known through Bartolozzi's engraving of it. It recalls, however, the traditions of Guido Reni as watered down by Albano, and although graceful and well-drawn in figures and draperies gives no hint of originality. In her portrait of herself, however—the picture mezzotinted by Valentine Green—we have distinct evidence of a very engaging talent and a good eye for character. Her portraits and pictures were numerous and appeared regularly in the London exhibitions; what grounds she had, therefore, for the complaint that her husband would not let her "rank professionally" is not clear. The Prince of Wales was a fairly frequent guest at the Cosways' house; the husband painted him several times, and Mrs. Cosway also produced a portrait of him in oil which was exhibited in the Old Masters exhibition of the Royal Academy in the winter of 1909-10. He is represented in the character of "Prince Florizel"—'Perdita' Robinson's lover. It is a life-size half-figure nearly in profile to the left, delicate and rather grey in the flesh tones which are scarcely relieved against the sky and landscape background. It is a quiet, skilful work which, although possessing little strength, held its own among pictures of unusual merit; so that we must recognize genuine talent in the lady who, but for the marriage that cut short her further study, might have made a greater mark in the world.

John Smart

Two other miniaturists, the contemporaries and fellow students of Cosway, ran "the little vain man" rather close in public esteem. They were John Smart and Ozias Humphry. Smart, who was also the pupil of Cosway and received from him much help and encouragement, was undoubtedly the greatest of the three, judged strictly on his artistic merit irrespective of the charm, that elusive and irresistible quality, which excuses so many defects and is often held to be a substitute for real ability. For the more solid excellences which we demand of a painter, Smart should rightly take his place after the great Samuel Cooper himself, because to good drawing, good colour, delicacy, and minuteness of finish, he added a knowledge—which he displayed with much judgement—of accurate facial anatomy and construction that the others could not rival. The result is that there is a life-likeness about his little pictures, a vitality and a searching expression, which place them above the more alluring miniatures of all other men except Cooper. It is obvious that in securing this paramount quality he had to sacrifice a good deal of superficial beauty. In other words, he was no flatterer; and if a lady were plain, like "Mrs. Cornwallis," he would make her plain, and let us feel that the woman herself was before us to the life. "Sir Charles Oakeley, Bart., D.C.L.," Governor of Madras, belonging to Mr. Pierpont Morgan has this quality of life, and especially of fine modelling; and the colour of the face is not so bricky in complexion as Smart sometimes renders the faces of men—his sole defect.

"Sir Charles Oakeley, Bart." Plate 82 (b)

Several of his best works are in the Salting Collection, now the property of the nation, and from them we see that he was not blind to beauty when it was before him—as in the miniatures of "Maria Cosway" (1784) or the "Lady Unknown" with dark hair—and that he was a master of well-managed light and shade and of manly character, as is shown in his "Charles Saville, Esq." Indeed the last-named might be enlarged to life-size and, like a Holbein miniature, it would retain its vigour and its impressive force. His five years' sojourn in India, whither he went on the return of his friend Ozias Humphry, ripened his talent: indeed, his "Sir C. Oakeley" proves that some of his best work was produced there.

Ozias Humphry, R.A.

His friend Humphry, although not quite his equal in power, has the greater fame, mainly, it may be surmised, because he became a member of the Royal Academy, and because at two periods, when his eyes gave him trouble, he practised in oil. His works in this medium, whether bust-pieces or full-lengths, taken as a whole, rarely rise much above mediocrity; indeed the few examples from his hand in the National Portrait Gallery, if judged by themselves, would vouchsafe him but a very modest position among British artists, a far less important rank than he really merits. Yet his life-size group-portrait of Walpole's beautiful nieces "The Ladies Maria and Horatia Waldegrave" (of 1780) shows him possessed of undoubted talent. It is probable that but for the weakness of his eyes, brought on by a fall from his horse, he never would have turned to life-size work from miniature-painting which he had practised in Reynolds's own studio—(Reynolds was ever kindly to his fellow-men of Devonshire). These so impressed the President that he introduced young Humphry to the King, who at once and thenceforward became his patron. Humphry's little portrait of Queen Charlotte at Windsor Castle has great character and life and the pose is unusually natural, graceful, and easy; indeed, in composition Humphry excelled and his colour is commonly delicate and pleasing. At one period, however, he became fond of a superfluity of red in his flesh and backgrounds, so hot in tone that we ask ourselves if the colour has not altered—a change that would have come about had he attempted to obtain richness and depth by mixing indigo and Indian red. The indigo of course would have flown; but why this should occur in the flesh is not by any means clear. The peculiarity is specially noticeable in his misleading little copies of the Chandos portrait of Shakespeare of which he painted at least three: one of these he executed for his patroness the Duchess of Portland, another is in the Garrick Club collection, and a third is in private hands. That he had grace and the power of producing a convincing likeness is seen in the portrait of "Mary Wilkes, daughter of John Wilkes," which is a capital piece of painting, but relatively devoid of those higher qualities which we look for in

"Mary Wilkes" Plate 82 (c)

true masters of miniature-painting. There is evidence here on the artist's part of being too easily satisfied with mere craftsmanship; perhaps the lady herself interested him no more than she interests us. Like Smart and his sons, with Tilly Kettle, Zoffany, and many others, Humphry visited India with great success, so that not a few of his finest works remain in that country in the cabinets of the Rajahs. Excellent as it is in many ways Humphry's work misses the highest level, because the artist lacked true grasp of character. His draughtsmanship, however, is usually excellent.

R. E. Pine

Herein he far outshone Robert Edge Pine, whose weakness in this respect was at the root of his non-success in England. He was a Londoner, son of the engraver, who first brought himself into notice as a painter of theatrical portraits, among which was the fine full-length of "Mrs. Yates as 'Medea,'" already mentioned, and the half-length, full-face portrait of "David Garrick" —the picture on which his reputation chiefly rests. It is full of life and vivacity, a fine likeness, and good in colour, and painted with a skilful brush. His full-length portrait of the Duke of Northumberland at the Middlesex Hospital is an able work, and is equalled by his whole-length of King George II. Thinking himself unappreciated in England (where, however, not a few of his pictures of actors and actresses were thought worthy of being engraved by McArdell, Dickinson, and other mezzotinters of the front rank), disappointed and embittered from being passed over by the Royal Academy he emigrated to America, where he commanded a great vogue and painted many of the leading statesmen. His "George Washington" and portraits of the family of the first President were produced during his stay at Mount Vernon in 1785. Like Copley, Pine would at times introduce portraits into historical compositions, as in the picture of "Admiral Rodney in action on board the Formidable," now, or till lately, in the Town Hall of Kingston, Jamaica; other works of the kind were destroyed by fire in America, where he died in 1790. In Pine's portraits of men there is character and expression, but the painting (like the drawing and the talent in them) is thin. At the same time he had the gift, none too common, of variety of arrangement, and his colour is agreeable enough, sometimes, indeed, inclining to richness, and his touches of lake, judicious in themselves but rather too frequently introduced, serve as a sort of hall-mark of his work during a considerable portion of his career.

John Russell, R.A.

Pastel-painting, which, as has been said, had never become properly acclimatized in England—nor, indeed, has it done so to this day—must be considered to have attained the highest degree of popularity it ever enjoyed, at the hands of John Russell. He was a prolific artist and his output was prodigious. His bright colouring, strength, freedom, and power of producing a good likeness brought him wide patronage, and he soon became known as

the Prince of English Pastellists. He was a little too flamboyant in manner and to that extent he was lacking in the more refined taste and quiet force, and subtle grasp of character and expression of Quentin de la Tour. His groups, especially his fancy portraits of children engaged in some pretty rustic pursuit, are often of great charm in the opinion of those who are not too exacting. At the same time he was a far truer artist than would readily be believed from an examination of a large collection of portraits exhibited under his name, for few men have suffered more from the attribution to them of work which they never executed or saw. It is true that his colour was sometimes strident, but the age of red and blue coats, of rouged and powdered cheeks, of pencilled eye-brows and lashes, and painted lips, must be held in some degree responsible for a riot of colour which, as is the nature of the pastel, has not faded with time; indeed, it often occurs that owing to ill-usage the last sobering touches have been rubbed off, and what is left revealed is practically the ground on which he laid his more delicate and sobering tones. That he had a sense of grace is seen by the portrait of his sister-in-law, "Miss Faden;" even our plate, deprived though it is of colour, is witness to his delicate modulation of the forms, the clever relation of the colour passages, the pleasing gradations and broken tones of the flesh tints, the playful touch of the pastel as it flutters over the accessories, the excellent drawing of the hand —a virtue not possessed by all—and the picturesque fancy of the general arrangement. He could be at once spirited and delicate. It is curious that Russell succeeded best where crayon drawing is most difficult, and showed more power of colour than his master Cotes, and in his men's portraits at least as great an appreciation of character.

"Miss Faden" Plate 83

His oil pictures are often good without being very good. At first he showed the influence not only of Cotes but of Reynolds and Romney; later on he sought to encroach on the domain of Gainsborough, as those who visited the Old Masters Exhibition at the Royal Academy of 1909-10 were amused to see. This full-length portrait of "Miss S. D. Chambers, with her dog," painted in 1798, aims not only at reproducing as far as he could the treatment of Gainsborough, but also to suggest the attitude of the "'Perdita' Robinson." The contrast is lamentable enough; yet the courage and, as far as it went, the brilliancy of the artist are incontestable. Showy as it is, on the whole, rather blatant indeed, there are good passages of colour in the cream dress and the pink sash. It is not without reason, then, that Russell is remembered by his pastels, especially those which he executed in the years immediately following his official appointment as "Portrait-painter in crayons to King George III and the Prince of Wales."

James Northcote, R.A.

To pass from Russell to James Northcote is to emerge from the eighteenth

century into the nineteenth—not so much as to the date of the portraiture as to the spirit of it. Northcote was the first to present what we of to-day consider the modern portrait—a matter-of-fact, honest, unaffected representation of the sitter. Such a portrait may be said to have no date: it is always modern, always fresh, and always makes its direct appeal. It is difficult to realize that Northcote was a scholar of Reynolds, had worked in his studio, had made copies for him with such ability that few can tell the difference, except those with expert eyes who can recognize his lesser degree of impasto. In his own portraits, on the other hand, the colour is more loaded on the face than was Reynolds's practice, and although Northcote at first aimed at the richness of his master's palette, he rarely if ever succeeded in rivalling it. His portraits of men were better than those of women, for whose feminine grace the heaviness of his hand was ill-suited. They were all firm and decided except, often enough, about the eyes and lips, and although he was effective in his strong light and shade he was frequently inaccurate. He had many male sitters, but, generally speaking, ladies shunned him, not more perhaps for his apparent lack of sympathy with grace and elegance, than on account of the discomfort, to use a mild word, of his studio. Northcote was a thrifty person, penurious and niggardly, and his painting-room could never become a place of rendezvous of the fashionable cognoscenti. Moreover, he did not know how to flatter, either with his brush or with his caustic tongue. So he applied himself to "history pictures" that frittered away his talents and his time, and to male portraiture, in which his solid modelling and sound method of work did more for his ultimate reputation than all his other productions put together. His auto-portrait in the National Portrait Gallery is an excellent specimen of his art —searching in character, quite admirable in draughtsmanship and modelling, and as remorseless towards himself as it was his practice to be towards the rest of his sitters. It is simple, both in execution and arrangement, but admirably effective as a psychological study. We recognize in it the shrewd cynic, the honest, miserly man, the more than capable craftsman, as serious and sober in his art as in his outlook upon life. These qualities, which were admitted by his contemporaries, made an undoubted impression on the art of his day and had no little effect in awakening the general run of artists from the common belief in conventionality and affectation as a substitute for originality and as a necessary ingredient or concomitant of polite portrait-painting. Such a man and such an artist could scarcely be popular; but at least he gained respect. Towards the end of his career he painted for Sir William Knighton a series of sixty heads, of which one of the best is that of "Sir Walter Scott;" this is to be ranked as one of the few satisfactory portraits of the great novelist.

"James Northcote, R.A." by Himself
Plate 84

Francis Wheatley, R.A.

Francis Wheatley is usually remembered for his charming pictures of the rustic amusements of graceful well-to-do people simply but picturesquely attired, who also enact, in tasteful rooms, scenes illustrative of the contentment and bliss of virtuous family life. To this he was partly inspired by his pretty wife, who appears in so many of his pictures of this class. And he is esteemed, too, for his elegant renderings of the lower folk, ultra-amiable peasants and gentle work-people, as in his "Cries of London." In such scenes he is to be grouped along with his juniors Thomas Rowlandson, working with the reed pen, and George Morland, with the brush. Such works, however, were the production of his later years. He began as a painter of decorations and of landscape, for which he had a natural and graceful talent. He was a pupil of the Royal Academy and acquired sufficient facility to turn with ease to the painting of portraits when the rage for having likenesses painted of oneself, one's family, and one's friends, burst upon England with a violence which was one of the phenomena of the age. Wheatley produced many a small full-length portrait, and made a sort of speciality later on of painting his sitters, as it were, in character. He seemed to act on Garrick's advice to Romney—"Make your sitters *do* something." Wheatley would place them in their natural or professional surroundings, usually with good dramatic effect. So we have the likeness of "Vice-Admiral Arthur Phillip," the founder and early administrator of the convict settlement at Botany Bay—shown landing at that grim spot. The figure is full of character from shoes to cocked hat, and is well set in a landscape which, rather stately as it is, is better in atmospheric effect than in composition. Nevertheless it is happier than the far more stilted, yet similar design by William Dobson of "Phineas Pett," for the "keeping" of the whole and the "out-of-doorness" are well sustained. Indeed, Wheatley's landscape settings are usually a good deal more than backgrounds, and always suit the figures without engulfing them. In the painting of his figures Wheatley shows a certain kinship with Zoffany, but as a rule his technique was broader and his handling more fluent.

"Admiral Phillip" Plate 85

When Wheatley was oppressed by the impertinent intrusion of his creditors he showed his view of the situation by retiring to Dublin where he painted the crowded group of "The Collecting of the Irish Volunteers in College Green, 1779," which is now in the National Gallery of Ireland. After some years he returned to London as the result of his proceedings with respect to his painting one of his large groups of "Members of the Irish House of Commons." With an original sense of humour and an eye to the main chance which every practical joker and lover of financial ingenuity will appreciate, he included in his picture the portraits of as many Members as it would hold and collected from each sitter the price of the subscription plate;

and when the composition was full he obliterated the heads of those who had paid, and painted in fresh subscribers—and then hurried back to England to enjoy in safety the aftermath of the joke. During his sojourn in Dublin he painted the head of "Henry Grattan," now in the National Portrait Gallery, where may also be seen his own portrait as a young man, in the manner of an early Gainsborough. Among his more important pictures is the portrait of "The second Duke of Newcastle, with a Shooting Party."

Daniel Gardner

There is a distinct affinity between the grace of Wheatley and that of Daniel Gardner; but Gardner's had an added facile elegance which brings him closer to Gainsborough. Indeed, up to within quite recent years his best pictures have frequently been attributed to that master, as well as to Reynolds, and the ascription, unaccountably enough, was generally accepted. The resemblance was wholly superficial, and it is difficult to understand how anyone who examines the technique of his work could be deceived. His handling was more deliberate and smoother than Gainsborough's and wholly lacking, of course, in the feathery touches which the greater man came to adopt; perhaps the occasional looseness of Gainsborough's drawing was too easily identified with that of Gardner. When we come to Gardner's pastels, sometimes, in a degenerate period of his art, executed with extraordinary carelessness and defiance of facial construction no mistake could possibly be made, supposing that Gainsborough had painted in that method. Gardner was a great favourite in his day and inspired Hayley the poet, Romney's friend and biographer, to the lines, lamentably unprophetic for a full century:

> "Nor, Gardner, shall the muse in haste forget
> Thy taste and ease, tho' with a fond regret."

The muse in haste forgot, and totally, and it is but within the past few years that we see the work of Gardner competed for in the sale-rooms: the price of four hundred and fifty guineas given not long since for a pastel unidentified portrait-group of playing children would have filled the art-world with astonishment twenty years ago. His grouping of children occasionally approximated to Romney's pseudo-classic arrangement in "The Stafford Children." He practised his art almost in private; few of his pictures are known except through the work of the leading mezzotinters of his day, to whom we owe the memory of several charming, but rather characterless portraits, such as the pretty "Mrs. Wilbraham," engraved by Thomas Watson.

The public taste for small and pretty portraits was now insatiable, and the demand for relative cheapness brought into existence a new form of art. Pastel alone did not satisfy the crowds of sitters waiting to be painted; and miniatures were not only expensive—for they required time and care necessary

to high finish—but they lacked the element of novelty. To meet this demand Cosway invented the style of pencilled-in figures with tinted faces and hands, already alluded to; but it was left to John Downman to introduce a still simpler and more rapid, and therefore cheaper style—his little heads drawn on paper with very finely pointed black chalk and the shadows rubbed in with the stump, and rather carefully washed in in colour. This colour was applied at the back during the earlier portion of his career—as has often been done in small ivories in low relief on thin slabs—and the delicate, almost ghostly, tinting delighted all ladies by its softness and its tenderness. These portraits are nearly always oval in shape, showing the face in profile to the left, and taking in the bust to just below the waist. When two, or even three, figures were included, Downman showed great skill in composition. He who had begun by painting life-sized pictures in oil without much distinction, now travelled about the country, staying "in the mansions of the great," as we are told, and drawing nearly every lady of quality of the day and most of the noblemen, and many of the Royal families of England and Prussia. These profile portraits remind us somewhat of the manner in which George Dance, R.A., the architect, sketched the portraits of the more important artists of his time; but Downman had an exquisite feeling for a profile which few save Cosway could rival. These faces, which convey the full grace of the lady, and sometimes the character and expression of the man—notably in the portrait of "Frederick the Great, King of Prussia"—are usually as empty as the artist could keep them, in order that they should tell as a delicate, almost prismatic patch, against the faintly tinted background. At the best they are little more than pretty and artistic trifles, with their qualities all on the surface, (though in certain cases they claim serious attention); but in view of the vogue they enjoyed at the time, a vogue once more revived at the hands of collectors who are ready to pay considerable sums for them in view of the suitability for the decoration of the boudoir, it is scarcely possible to omit mention of them from these pages. Downman's oil-painting has been summarily passed over; but there exists by him a characteristic small portrait group called "The Greenwich Couple," showing a lady and gentleman arm-in-arm in a landscape, which proves that Downman could paint well with a full brush. The tone is excellent, but the drawing poor.

John Downman, A.R.A.

George Engleheart

Not less popular, and certainly not less fully employed, was George Engleheart the miniaturist. He was not to be compared with his rival John Smart for power, insight, and breadth of view, but he had many of the best qualities of the graceful painter "in little." He had taste and an engaging feeling for a picture, and though he had little depth his capacity for pleasing was such that he captured all but the sterner and more exacting critics. His

colour was well adapted to his own tender sentiment, and his draughtsmanship, when he abandoned his rather woolly or fuzzy texture, was firm and good; indeed, the care he expended on his pencilling is amazing when we consider the prodigious amount of work he got through. Between 1775 and 1813 he produced no fewer than 4,853 miniature portraits—an average of about a hundred a year throughout the whole period of nearly forty years, not including his work in other directions. In the first of these years be painted only eighty-five; in 1783 and in 1786, the number rose to 208, the next year to 212, and in 1788 to no fewer than 228, or about a day and a half to each. These figures are a greater tribute to public favour and support and to the artist's fertility, than to his respect for his art, for he himself could hardly have pretended that conscientiousness could be maintained consistently in the face of such figures as these. Yet his work reached an extraordinarily high level, and at its best could rival that of Cosway. It was often at its best. A typical example is his "Miss Mary Berry," the lady who edited the works and letters of Walpole, and from him inherited Strawberry Hill, and whose resemblance to her pretty sister Agnes, also painted by Engleheart, was so remarkable that it is difficult to tell one from the other. The manner in which are here preserved the beauty, dignity, and lady-like grace of the sitter, reveals the talent of the artist as strikingly as the taste and refinement of his colour and drawing. This unquestionably is one of his masterpieces. His portraits of men do not always rise to this height, yet some of his miniatures of persons of mark and importance, such as that of "Mr. Plowden, Director of the East India Company," prove that power, character, and expression were well within his grasp. His early training under Sir Joshua Reynolds was at the bottom of his success, and his admirable miniatures of a number of the President's pictures steadied his hand and taught him the value of rich colour, good composition of single figures and groups, and light and shade. That influence gone he developed a greater feeling for refinement and tenderness, and drew from the expansive Hayley the poetic tribute in which he sums up Engleheart's more fascinating qualities—

"Mary Berry" Plate 86 (a)

> "Gracefully true and delicately strong,
> Rich in those charms that to pure life belong."

In 1790 Engleheart had been appointed Miniature Painter to the King, who openly declared his delight in the well-conducted artist, adding, as a side hit at Cosway, the laureate of the Prince of Wales's rival Court, that he "would have no fops about him."

Sir William Beechey, R.A.

The degeneration of British portrait painting for many years after the passing of Gainsborough, Reynolds, and Romney, is sufficiently proved by the fact that Sir William Beechey stepped quietly into the vacant place, became the

pet of Fashion and of Society, and was duly knighted by the King—the second artist to receive that mark of recognition, and one of the six whose work is noticed in these pages. His supremacy was, indeed, successfully challenged by Hoppner and Lawrence, yet Beechey maintained his position in the favour of the public, who seem to have been insensible to the enfeebled condition of art. Sir Joshua Reynolds, his chosen master, had been kind to Beechey, setting him to copy his pictures, and helping him with advice in general and in detail with respect to his portraits. We may trace the Reynolds influence in many of his works, with their good modelling and their glazed flesh tints; but otherwise than with Reynolds his pigment is usually smooth and thin. We often see an echo of Reynolds in his male portraits, in which Beechey succeeded far better than in those of ladies. He was always an unequal painter, partly no doubt on account of his enormous output; indeed, I believe I am right in saying that his contribution of three hundred and seventy-two oil pictures to the Royal Academy includes the greatest number of portraits credited to any one painter, except Pickersgill, with three hundred and eighty-four. Abraham Cooper, R.A., ran him close with three hundred and fifty-three, and tied with him, at four hundred and twenty, as the total number of pictures publicly exhibited. Yet unequal as he was Beechey was not often actually slipshod in his work, though his women's portraits are at times in some degree careless and unsatisfactory. Rather unaccountably, these portraits are vastly admired by many, mainly for their sweet and delicate colour and for the general purity of their flesh tones. But the draperies are often poor and we are made to feel and to resent the somewhat showy and "clever" treatment of them when we are looking for higher qualities.

No doubt, Beechey was severely handicapped by the costume. The lovely fashions and coiffures of the time of Reynolds and Gainsborough, even of Romney's later days, had vanished with the years, and a modified Empire style was rapidly preparing the way for Victorian ugliness. Even in Beechey's portraits they are often frankly ugly, without a touch of quaintness or piquancy to relieve them. There is a "Portrait of a Little Girl," shown by Mr. Pfungst in the Birmingham Portrait Exhibition of 1900, which represents a child of about six years old in a high straw poke-hat over a frilled cap, with a very high-waisted long straight white frock showing white linen frilled pantaloons down to the feet. The coral necklace and blue band of the hat are the only touches of colour. Only the little face has charm; so that the picture, though amusing and natural, is unattractive in a high degree. So with the portraits of ladies; as has been said the high-dressed hair of Reynolds's day and the ample coiffure of Romney's no longer existed. Hair was now neatly smoothed down and parted; short sleeves were puffed; long, graceful folds of the robes

were reduced to little artistic significance in the fashionable frocks, and the rounded stooping back that was the new substitute for the former elegant and dignified carriage detracted still further from the lines of eternal grace. What, we may wonder, would Reynolds and Gainsborough have made of them?—something fine, no doubt, but one of the principal ingredients of the pictorial beauty that is their chief glory would be gone. The material was not of the kind to assist a masterpiece of arrangement, and any *chef-d'œuvre* of design would have been in spite and not because of it.

Beechey usually sought to add interest to his women's folk by imparting to them a wonderful glow of health, so that subtlety of modelling and characterization were often lacking. Look at the portrait of "Mrs. Archer" and you will see a fair type of the general run of Beechey's better portraits of lusty femininity. The placing and pose of the figure have no particular attraction, there is little expression upon the face and little brain behind the eyes. The general impression is one of pretty hair, a sweet mouth, and a skilfully though too summarily painted shawl; indeed, a commonplace picture conceived on no particular artistic plan and with little subtlety in any part of it. And there is a nearly complete absence of idealization where it is most wanted. To the other side of the account we must credit a pleasing colour-scheme formed by the white dress, the brown diaphanous lace-trimmed shawl, the cream-coloured bonnet, and the dark brown hair. The picture is typical of the taste then prevailing throughout Europe—allowing for national differences of characteristics; and typical, too, of the growing mannerism of Beechey's later days.

"Mrs. Archer"
Plate 88

With Beechey's portraits of men, whether great imposing whole-lengths (in military tunics, blue coats, and the like, and commonly in top-boots) or in the more modest half-lengths, the artist was usually if not uniformly successful. Beechey was well on in his career and had left his early conversation-pieces *à la* Hogarth thirty years behind him when he painted the portrait of "Sir David Wilkie" and exhibited it in the Royal Academy in 1809. There is nothing slipshod here. The figure is well placed in the canvas, the attitude interesting in the pattern it makes, the poise of the head original enough to be striking and the face itself, youthful as it is with its twenty-four years, full of feeling and charm of expression. Here was the man who had just electrified the town with "The Village Politicians," "The Blind Fiddler," and was finishing "The Rent Day," and was within a few weeks of being elected into the Royal Academy. The painter has done his best, for the picture was to go to his friend the sitter. The light and shade are admirably managed, the modelling rather empty but sufficient, and allowing that Wilkie had his ear set so far back, the drawing is excellent. Wilkie's portrait of himself here

"Sir David Wilkie, R.A."
Plate 87

reproduced (Plate 124) seems to justify the artist. The canvas as it hangs in the National Gallery of Scotland is a pleasing example of Beechey's ability. But when we come to what is called his masterpiece, the great equestrian group at Hampton Court Palace, representing "George III Reviewing the Tenth Dragoons," shown in the Royal Academy in 1798, we marvel that he could so have risen to a large and vigorous historical work. There may be many faults in it—the introduction of studio-lighted figures in an open-air scene is the most heinous of them, and the too obvious and too artificial means of securing "effect" is the next—yet the whole is imagined with much spirit and carried out with considerable fervour. The similarity in design to Copley's "Siege of Gibraltar" (as it is called for brevity's sake) can escape no one; and as that work was only completed in 1790 and, as a vast and complicated design must have been on the way for several years, it becomes a matter for speculation which painter plagiarized from the other. In Beechey's work the portraits are good; and it is little wonder that the Sovereign should forthwith have knighted the artist, who had for five years been the Portrait Painter to Queen Charlotte and was to become in addition the official painter to the Duke of Gloucester.

When we look at this picture we stand amazed at the weak, mawkish sentimentality of his picture of Lady Louisa Bathurst called "Adoration"—a wingless angel floating amid the clouds—graceful, petty, forced, trumpery, and empty as a conception, meant only, it would appear, to offer cheap consolation to a stricken invertebrate nature. Here, in these two pictures, we see the greatest strength and the uttermost weakness of Beechey, whose limitations force themselves on the notice of every spectator. Had Raeburn, his contemporary, settled at once in London in 1787, after his visit to Rome, whither Reynolds had sent him, instead of returning to Edinburgh, there can be little doubt that he and Lawrence between them would have squeezed Beechey out—Raeburn monopolizing the commissions for strong character and solid art, and Lawrence for sparkling character and brilliant painting.

Sir Henry Raeburn, R.A.

Raeburn, however, preferred to return to his native heath and to assume, as he did almost at once, the headship of art in Scotland, where there was no one worthy of being considered a rival or even of playing the part. Henley calls him "the last true master of the classic convention in portraiture." By classic, of course, he means traditional, for there was about him nothing of the so-called classical or quasi-classical arrangement in his female portraits, of which Romney was the last preëminent professor. Such a composition as "The Gower Family" would have been impossible to a man of his unaffected, robust temperament, and distasteful, too, to his sitters. He was absolutely sincere and matter-of-fact in his view of people, painting them with as much

literalness as was compatible with his art, and as he seems to have had mainly persons of plain common-sense to paint—natural, unaffected Scottish folk of brains and of breeding—he was enslaved by no foolish whims of society, no fashionable crazes; on the contrary, he was left to develop his genius, almost alone upon the artistic stage, in a vast series of portraits in which not a single one, so far as I can remember, is made to play a part or appear in an assumed character. His art was simple yet subtle, broad yet refined, and if we see him playing other men's tunes from time to time, it is not as a plagiarist, but as one who would find fresh harmonies in them for himself. Thus, his "Portraits of Sir John Clerk, fifth Baronet of Penicuik, and Rosemure Dacre his wife," of 1790, shown in the Old Masters Winter Exhibition of the Royal Academy, 1910, in its *motif*, which has all the appearance of striking originality, recalls curiously, as I have said, the group by Wright of Derby of "The Rev. D'Ewes Coke of Brookhill Hall, his wife, and Daniel Coke Esq., M.P." of 1772. The resemblance is almost too striking to be accidental; yet the most original part of it, artistically speaking, is the light falling on the man's outstretched arm and reflected on his face, otherwise in shadow, from his wife's white dress, and outlining the lady's face and illuminating her figure. This is one of the earliest examples in British art in which the problem of the natural play of out-of-door illumination has been dealt with in the modern spirit. His "Two Boys in a Landscape" reminds us of Romney's "Edward Bootle and his Brother." Other parallels of *motif* might easily be found, such as his "General Sir Ronald Ferguson" out shooting with his dog, and Gainsborough's "Lord Leicester," to say nothing of Velazquez before them; his "Professor John Wilson" standing beside his horse, which repeats in nearly all its main lines and in the attitude both of man and beast the "Captain Orme" of Sir Joshua Reynolds—perhaps the most striking parallel of all—and, in a lesser degree, Gainsborough's "George, Prince of Wales." In these cases, nevertheless, Raeburn is always himself, and his powerful well-balanced individuality save him from the charge of want of originality. He would even repeat himself in his general arrangement, as where he placed "Mrs. Steuart of Coltness," "Mrs. Campbell of Balliemore," and several more, on the same garden seat and painted them all more or less in the same attitude. It was not the result of conventionality or lack of imagination, but rather an acquiescence in the national attitude of mind towards a Scottish country lady.

When Raeburn returned from Rome—where, as Sir Walter Armstrong, reasoning by induction, shrewdly suggests, he must have given special attention to the "Pope Innocent X" of Velazquez in the Palazzo Doria-Pamphili—he was already a fine painter and, as has been hinted, not unimpressionable. His first portrait of the violinist and composer, "Neil Gow," fiddling, reveals no

"Neil Gow" Plate 89 (a

direct and immediate result, so far as outlook may be taken as the test, for its Scottish character is as strong as that of the sitter. His technique, however, was already determined for some years to come. Long afterwards, in 1827, Wilkie recognized Velazquez as the derivative, or, if not the inspiration, the coincident of Raeburn's touch. Writing from Madrid, where he was studying the work of the great Spaniard (to the detriment of his own) Wilkie says: "There is much resemblance between him and the works of some of the chiefs of the English school; but of all, Raeburn resembles him most, in whose square touch in heads, hands, and accessories, I see the very counterpart of Velazquez." That resemblance, however, must have been to some extent a natural development and not a direct influence of "Pope Innocent," for we see little sign of it in the double portrait of "Sir Ronald Ferguson, Bart., and Robert Ferguson practising archery"—usually known as "The Ferguson Brothers" of 1789. There is more feeling here of Romney than of Velazquez; yet no one could ever mistake the painting for Romney. It was the first of Raeburn's several pictures of gentlemen-archers, and is very skilfully composed in its lines and simply executed. The elder brother is brought into prominence by his position and by the light which falls upon him; the other is given indirect importance, because, although he is placed farther back, from the very fact that he is thrown into shadow without any obvious pictural reason, the eye involuntarily seeks him out and brings him forward into notice. The colour-scheme is very quiet; grey for Sir Ronald, and brown and grey for his brother, seen against a grey sky. The handling is certain and accomplished, but the drawing is a little careless in the execution of the eyes. At about the same time the youngest brother was painted—"William Ferguson of Kilrie." The colour-scheme is the same, the hair providing the note of brown, but the sentiment of the picture is totally different. The elder brothers are matter-of-fact young gentlemen and have called forth no particular sympathy from the painter. In this picture, however, we have sympathy overflowing, with a suggestion of poetry and humour all too unusual with Raeburn. The lighting is cleverly managed not merely for pictorial effect but in order to accord best with the natural dreamy expression of the fun-loving boy. The luminous shadow on the right cheek, the subtle drawing of the mouth, and the swift brushing of hair and drapery we meet again and again in the artist's work, but seldom rendered with such tender effect. There is here a sentiment, as well as an effect of illumination not unlike that in Gainsborough's "Orpin," but here in the boy it is unaffected and legitimate while in the old man there is a distinct appeal to an emotion independent of art itself. It is this sentiment, then, which suggests in the picture a greater looseness of handling than really exists, but which we often find in those portraits which proclaim the painter's particular

"Sir Ronald Ferguson, Bart., and Robert Ferguson" Plate 89 (b)

"William Ferguson of Kilrie" Plate 90

interest in his sitters, such, for example, as the "Miss Elizabeth Welwood, of Garvock," and, still more, the fine "Henry Mackenzie" (author of "The Man of Feeling") at the National Portrait Gallery. The subtlety of expression and handling in this head are extraordinary.

Raeburn now ripened with rapidity, and his self-confidence, of which we do not feel altogether convinced in the portrait of "William Ferguson," had become certainty when he embarked on the full-length picture of his wife seated in a well-imagined, vaguely-indicated landscape. She is a kindly woman of firm character, to whom her husband owed very much; and he has painted her with a swift but sure brush, and invested with a dignity that rises almost to stateliness. Here, as in practically all of his women's portraits, the costume is of the simplest—a modest brownish-purple cloak over a creamy white dress, and a white turban on the head—without jewelry, ornaments or accessories of any kind, such as would add sparkle and effect to the canvas. The passage of this picture from hand to hand indicates well the bounding esteem in which collectors have come to regard the great Scottish artist. In the Raeburn sale of 1877, when forty-nine portraits by the master realized £6,000, this picture was knocked down for £997. In the following year, the purchaser Mr. Heugh having died, it brought only £640, at which price it passed into the possession of Lord Tweedmouth. When that collection was dispersed in 1905 it realized 8,700 guineas. And at the same sale, it may here be stated, the National Gallery of Scotland had to pay four thousand five hundred guineas for the half-length of the artist, painted about the year 1815, at the period of his greatest maturity. Auction-room prices, of course, are not always an indication of contemporary value, as was proved when the majestic but not very well painted portrait of "Sir John Sinclair" was sold in London in 1903 for fourteen thousand guineas (it was freely stated that it was "bought in") and, coming to the hammer again in 1909 the highest point reached was six thousand two hundred guineas, and then reverted to the original ownership.

"Lady Raeburn" Plate 91

These pictures were richly conceived and richly realized. But in not a few of Raeburn's portraits the process of simplification and reticence led to some emptiness and coldness of manner and occasionally a hardness that tell seriously against their undoubted merit and beauty. We see this in his "Miss Wilhelmina Ross" and "Lady Maitland." Sometimes, though the colour may be strong and the brush-work brilliant, there is a hardness quite foreign to Raeburn's true form, as in the smaller portrait of "Lord Melville." But when we come to "The Macnab" we are made to feel the full force of the artist's genius and can scarce resist the impulse to take off our hats to it. Here we have the great eccentric Laird of Macnab in the

"The Macnab" Plate 92

uniform of his regiment, the Breadalbane Fencibles of which he was Lieutenant-Colonel. He stands magnificently indomitable amid his Scottish mountains—a fine landscape, as grim as the laird himself who challenges us. By his powerful personality, as we can see, the appreciative painter was disconcerted not a jot. Lawrence declared the portrait the finest representation of a human being he ever saw. Perhaps it is one of the very finest and most imposing in modern art, but it is not, I think, for all its intense humanity, character, and expression, its fine draughtsmanship and modelling, and its picturesque design, quite on the same artistic plane as the earlier "Dr. Nathaniel Spens," stretching a bow—(it belongs to the Royal Company of Archers, of Edinburgh)—or as the "Colonel Macdonell of Glengarry," also in the national garb. In the former it is the picture, not the man, that appeals to us, and in the latter, not so much the fine presentation, as the wonderful management of the Gainsborough-like light and shade that makes the great work of art. That is to say, there is no attempt at drama in either of these, and they triumph in spite of being deprived of any adventitious aid. In "The Macnab," it must be admitted, there is a touch of drama, almost one might say of melodrama, that counts for a good deal in the success of the astonishing impression which it makes. The painting throughout commands admiration, and the head is a noble example of Raeburn's later manner when he dispensed as far as he could with "edges," and modelled his forms with such mastery that they melt as in nature into one another. It was the "Glengarry" which carried Raeburn into the Royal Academy in 1814; and he had but one year to wait before he was elected to full membership amid the plaudits of the whole body.

The power in the head of "The Macnab" is distanced in that of "Mrs. James Campbell." Here we have the strength of Rembrandt's "Old Woman" at the Hermitage, or "The Old Woman cutting her nails," in New York, and the vividness and vigour of Frans Hals's "Bohemienne," in the Louvre, almost of "Hille Bobbe," at Berlin, but with a technique, of course, all his own and necessarily upon a somewhat lower plane. Seldom has so much character been concentrated in the head of a woman as in this beautifully felt rendering of age, as fine in the composition of the whole picture, draperies and all, as it is quaint in invention. It is a finer thing than the portrait of the Scottish judge "Lord Newton" because it is more spontaneous and less deliberate. In the last-named, nevertheless, we have a masterpiece; the whole dignity and intellect of the man are depicted in the fine face, and the drawing of the eyes is a thing to linger over. Beside it we might place the "James Wardrop of Torbanhill." Still higher, although conceived in a conventional spirit is the full-length portrait of the old "Admiral Lord Duncan" in uniform. The figure stands splendidly, but it is the noble head, full of character and incident,

and effectively lighted, that catches the eye and compels unbounded admiration. The great though gradual change, already alluded to, had now fully declared itself in Raeburn's manner, not always to the advantage of his art. His "John Wauchope" reflects with much charm the expression of benevolence that lighted up the pleasing features of this amiable old Writer to the Signet; it is softly modulated in its forms which are delicately fused, but there is an indecision in the handling rare in the painter and a disagreeable quality in the colour rarer still. The picture is saved by the illumination which adds grace and feeling to a head itself not wanting in those virtues, and which, besides, serves to divert our attention from the poorly-painted hand.

"John Wauchope, W.S." Plate 94

In his large equestrian groups Raeburn is very much at his ease. They give him little trouble, for he seems to understand a horse almost as well as a man, and brings them together in a canvas with consummate craftsmanship. As we have seen, he was not above taking a hint from others; but his "Major William Clunes" is, as far as I know, entirely original in all respects. Ruskin's whimsical declaration that in pictures of this class we too often see nothing but a pair of shiny top-boots does not here apply. The boots do shine, but we are held at once by the novelty of the composition. The man is tall for the horse, and the heads of both are too much on the horizontal, so that the shape of the design is practically an upright oblong. This would be unfortunate, if not fatal, were it not that the colour, assisted by the oblique tree branch, saves the situation. It is not easy to foreshorten a horse as is here so well done, but Raeburn manages it without difficulty while insisting on the man's head as the chief note in the picture.

"Major William Clunes" Plate 95

He was as happy with boys as with men, especially when he shows them at sport. What could exceed the charm of the group of "The Three Macdonald Boys" and the spirit of his other pictures of lads at play? "The laughing Leslie Boy" is itself a creation. From the purely painter point of view Raeburn is not less admirable in the rendering of ladies. At the same time, he lacked that poetic charm which made the Englishmen of his day the painters *par excellence* of fair womanhood. A woman had to be very beautiful to awaken in him the real sense of romance, and presumably his heart was of tougher fibre than Gainsborough's or Romney's. Besides, perhaps he was usually not so fortunate in his models; not that pretty women were lacking in Scotland, but that they were not endowed with that style of grace and charm which the Southerners copied, evolved, and exaggerated so delightfully. Miss Margaret Suttie and her sister Janet, Mrs. Harriet Campbell, Lady Maitland, Mrs. Hodgson, Mrs. Cunninghame-Graham, the beautiful girl who sat for the Lawrence-like picture in the possession of Mr. Schwabacker (a model probably), the world-famous Mrs. Scott Moncrieff, and Mrs. Simpson, are among those who could all

lay claim to beauty in different measure, but of whom only the last was presented with real elegance and grace, in the large picture in which she is shown seated in a landscape. And there is "Mrs. William Urquhart," a piquante beauty, equally with Mrs. Scott Moncrieff a popular favourite. The flesh is quite daintily rendered, and the little curl is impudently brought down over one eye, while the simple white low-necked dress and the cloak thrown open at the bosom are put in with a few wonderful touches of the brush that seem to have been dashed with unconscious certainty at the canvas. Raeburn had not the chances enjoyed by his London brethren, but it is clear that he made the most of what he had. It is to be noted that several of his prettiest women and of his most pleasing groups were painted in his later years. Was it, then, Raeburn's fault all the time, and did the scales fall completely from his eyes only when his maturity was passing its meridian?

"Mrs. William Urquhart" Plate 93

It is curious that the rather masculine type of woman, sometimes almost Amazonian in character, so frequently appears among Raeburn's more or less middle-aged ladies; and stranger still that they spurred him to exceptional effort, and so to many fine performances. "Mrs. Cruikshank" (if it be not too severe to select her as a type of this group) is without doubt one of the artist's most brilliant achievements and, moreover, far and away the most modern, reflecting rather the French school of not more than a quarter of a century ago than the Scottish school of a hundred years since. This robust smiling lady in her fur-lined cloak seated authoritatively in her armchair must have created a sensation in the studios when her picture was shown—if it ever was. In this category the portrait of "Mrs. George Kinnear" must be included as among the most seriously accomplished.

Portraits of little girls are among Raeburn's happiest achievements. The "Girl Sketching," with the wistful face, the graceful figure, and the expressive poise of the head, is one of the prettiest pieces of unforced pathos in the work of the British school. Nothing could be more sturdily charming than the baby "Eleanor Gibson Carmichael" standing by her big dog; and when we look at little "Helen Stirling" in her frock and long pantaloons, and think of what Beechey made of these same unbecoming garments, we admire Raeburn the more for his charming scheme and for his clever device of rendering them with delicacy of texture as if they were of diaphanous gossamer silk.

There is in Raeburn's work a loftiness of intellect and nearly always a distinction of colour which contributed fundamentally to his great reputation, and have raised him to a place among the immortals. Without the authority so manifest in his canvases he would not have succeeded so quickly and so easily in putting himself at the beginning of his career at the head of Scottish art and in maintaining his position, without a shadow of serious competition,

during the whole course of his life. Thus he became the creator as well as the father of the Scottish school. Before him there was no tradition. He made one; and even to-day if men no longer seek to paint exactly like him, he is not old-fashioned, not *démodé* like so many men who have made greater noise in their day. His principles cannot be rejected as out of date. Painters still admire his strong, broad, expressive touch and his superb handling; his suppression of outlines whereby the edges of his faces sink into the backgrounds, or rather are lost and enveloped by atmosphere and shade—the wonderfully deep shadow which, in his best pictures, remains transparent; that massive treatment of strong-characterered heads; and above all the personality of the man which did for the Art of Scotland what had not been done by the combined efforts of all the men who had painted in North Britain for two centuries and more. But his greatest service of all was that, great as was the temptation to an earlier removal, he deferred until 1810 the transference of his home to London. The effect of his example on Scottish soil it is impossible to overrate. Until he had painted nearly everyone in Scotland worth painting he did not think to leave; but having done his work there he hankered for recognition in the metropolis and from his English brethren, which had been so long delayed. He had not long to wait for it when once he came South. He was received with open arms by artists and open purses by the art-loving public. His prices nearly doubled. Thus, his charge for a portrait 31 inches by 26 which was raised to thirty guineas on being elected a member of the Royal Academy in 1815, was further increased five years later to fifty. Of course Raeburn had to encounter the formidable rivalry of Beechey and Lawrence, who were firmly established as popular favourites. Hoppner had died a few years before. No doubt there was room for the three, although it is likely that Raeburn suffered some disappointment because commissions did not come to him as freely as they did "away North." This was due in part to the fact that he was too modern for the Londoners—most enterprizing Scottish artists are; and he was getting too old to educate the public. The end was not far off. In 1822 on the visit of the King to Edinburgh Raeburn was appointed King's Limner for Scotland and was duly knighted. The next year the artist died. It was fitting that the last portrait painted by him before he passed away should be that of Sir Walter Scott. He had left a school behind him in Scotland, the splendid heritage of a tradition that was to remain, even though so many followed him to London, just as Allan Ramsay and the rest had preceded him. More than one of these followers will call for notice later on.

CHAPTER VII

FROM HOPPNER TO LAWRENCE

WE now return to London and to the last of the miniaturists of whom there is occasion here to speak—almost the last of the professors of that beautiful art which was soon to become moribund: Nathaniel and Andrew Plimer. Nixon, Shelley, Richard Crosse, were all their seniors by a little, and echoed the successes of Nathaniel Dixon, Laurence Crosse, and one or two more of a previous generation, whom I have been constrained to pass over in silence. Nathaniel, the elder brother, was the last to come prominently upon the scene, and remained last, for his talents did not equal those of Andrew. At the same time, some of his smaller miniatures of men are full of character and strength and convince us that they were excellent likenesses. A couple of them, in the Salting Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum, will maintain Nathaniel Plimer's reputation as a painter of heads: he seldom attempted to go lower than the shoulders. His portraits of women, although well drawn, are weaker in execution and the colour is not always agreeable.

Nathaniel Plimer

His brother Andrew was the stronger for having had the advantage of Cosway's tutelage. He had an unusual gift for throwing two or three sitters together into a composition very happy in arrangement, as in the celebrated group of the Rushout sisters. These three ladies and their pretty mother—the wife of the first Baron Northwick—he painted separately, all of them, we are told, flattered by the artist, but all of them uncommonly charming. That of "The Hon. Elizabeth Rushout" (a miniature formerly identified with Anne—a pardonable error, as you could hardly tell the difference between the sisters) is here to prove how pretty he could be, how he would over-idealize, and how near he would come at times to the meretricious and the mawkish. This is the lady who married Mr. Sydney Bowles, and afterwards Mr. John Wallis Grieve. Yet this miniature is recognized as one of Plimer's best things. A

Andrew Plimer

"The Hon. Elizabeth Rushout" Plate 86 (c)

"Selina Plimer" Plate 86 (b)

pretty trifle is the portrait of his little daughter "Selina, as a Cupid," in the collection of Dr. G. C. Williamson. He here pushes sentimentality to its furthest limit, alike in subject and treatment. Plimer was occasionally fond of thus representing his sitters in character, so that it was hardly likely that his own offspring would escape. Regarded from the artistic point of view Andrew Plimer was at his best in his portraits of men and boys; there are fewer errors of drawing and proportion, and he gives us a vigour and insight that make good his claim to regard among the leading miniaturists.

John Hoppner

When the brush fell from the hands of Reynolds and Gainsborough, John Hoppner was but thirty years of age, well started on his career with the encouragement of the Court, and to his credit eight years' successful appearances at the Royal Academy, where he had exhibited the portraits of four Royal Princesses. Romney still held the field. Beechey, who had secured a start of four years, had not yet attracted the notice of the world of fashion; and Lawrence, who followed him closely, had but just appeared upon the scene. It was immediately evident that Lawrence was the man who was to be Hoppner's most serious rival in the struggle for preëminence in the years to come, and that over the works of these two painters the art world would be split into "camps" such as had been formed when Reynolds and Romney, in Lord Thurlow's words, "divided the town." But Hoppner and Lawrence after Reynolds and Romney!—the drop was considerable, and presaged a worse abasement in the future. Yet both men had genius of a kind—genius that was recognized by every seeing eye as no better than it was, the kind of ability that relegated them to a leading place in the second rank of British painters of the eighteenth century. Hoppner, in spite of his reputed birth, and in spite, too, of the good reading and good sense that enabled him towards the close of his career to become a clever and a piquant "Quarterly" reviewer, had fewer of the Court graces that came naturally to Lawrence; he had less of the power to please Court and Society by fascination of manners and of pencil, and was in that respect bound to go down in some degree before the charming personality and entrancing draughtsmanship of his rival. On the other hand, he had an eye for colour and a quality of paint and power of brush that in a great measure turned the tables on his redoubtable protagonist; and so the ding-dong battle of their reputations has gone on to the present day. For a long while after his death, however, Hoppner suffered at the hands of collectors, and up to 1878 the greatest sum ever bid for a portrait of his was £168. But in 1895 his full-length "Lord Nelson" which thirty years before had found an owner at the price of £100, fetched nearly £2,800; his "Lady Mary Greville" rose from £27 at the Stowe sale, to £8,190; and in 1901, his "Lady Louisa Manners" realized not less than £14,750—the highest sum

reached by an English portrait. When all allowances are made for the eccentricities of the sale-room, we must recognize in these prices the sincerity, at least, of the admiration they imply, and acknowledge the greater justice of them than of those which have been freely paid for far worse pictures by less competent painters.

Soon after the opening of his career Hoppner fell out of Royal favour and we find him painting portraits for a while at two guineas a head although his ability was openly admitted. Angelo declared that a portrait of an old lady which he had commissioned from the young artist was pronounced by Cipriani and Bartolozzi "to be superior in merit to all his contemporaries, with the exception of Sir Joshua Reynolds." This opinion ill accords with the caustic Anthony Pasquin's view that in those days Hoppner had "much confidence and little ability. . . . This gentleman has greedily assumed the manners of many, and having no prescribed master, he has boldly made free with all."

Here Pasquin, as John Williams called himself, laid his finger on Hoppner's chief weakness—the lack of originality which with his rare technical facility and power of assimilation, tempted him for a long while into imitating the styles of others, and mainly in its superficial qualities the manner, and even the subjects, of Reynolds. He was never a mere copyist, but he drew plentiful inspiration. His easy command of the brush, almost from the beginning, was such that he was often betrayed into sloppiness and emptiness. Some of his earliest portraits are so excellent that he rarely surpassed them, while others are meretricious almost to the point of vulgarity; yet we find among them works remarkable for richness of colour and sensuous charm such as distinguished the years of his maturity. This colour which was so much applauded in his day for its brilliancy has often, with noteworthy exceptions, sadly deteriorated by time: his devotion to the art of Reynolds was apparently too complete.

In 1782 he married Phoebe Wright, the daughter of Mrs. Wright the famous modeller in wax, and added in no small degree to his reputation by the character-pictures he painted of the beautiful girl: "The Salad Girl," "The Primrose Girl," "Caroline de Lichtfield," "The Fortune-Teller," "Clara at the Tomb of Eloisa," and the charming "Sophia Western" with a basket of flowers. All these pictures by their winsome grace attracted attention in the Royal Academy from 1780 onwards and brought many fair sitters to the painter's studio. Throughout his career Hoppner was pre-eminently the painter of pretty women and children. To his ladies, however, he would often impart such an insistent glow of health and animal spirits—like Beechey—that although they charm us they of necessity diminish the sympathy that we naturally extend to lovely beings more obviously in need, or more deserving, of it, in the face of this copious endowment with robustness of physique. This bloom he would

often obtain by curious red hatchings on the cheeks: we see them, for example, in his ever-popular "Countess of Oxford" in the National Gallery, and in what to some is his masterpiece among his female figures, "Mlle. Hillsberg dancing"—just as we see it used almost as a mannerism in the faces of M. Bonnat. In children we expect life and health; and in these, although Hoppner lacked a good deal of Reynolds's sweetness and ingenuousness, Hoppner succeeded to admiration. Whether we look at his single figures or his groups we are equally charmed. His little "Miss Cholmondeley," in a white dress, with flowers in her gathered-up skirt, advancing towards us in a well-painted landscape, has not only beauty but elegance—a quality in which Hoppner was too often deficient; and his "Edwin," afterwards fifth Earl of Darnley, standing artlessly between two rocks with a hand on each, has just that simplicity and naturalness which we miss so keenly in Lawrence's "Master Lambton." And take his groups. The picture he painted in 1789 of the Godsal children, better known by the engraver's title of "The Setting Sun," (although it was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1789 under the prosaic entry of "Portraits of a Young Lady and Two Children") has not only charm but originality. A good deal of the significance of it is lost in its translation into black-and-white, but the pleasantness of the composition,—with its natural linking of the figures—is as unmistakable as is the painter's sympathy with his sitters. Whether we may prefer the wholly delightful "Cavendish Children," or "The Douglas Children" of 1795, otherwise "Juvenile Retirement"—comprising three little girls and one trousered and be-frilled little boy wearing a great feathered hat—a design akin to "The Setting Sun;" or Hoppner's own family known as "Children Bathing" of four years before, in which the young flesh tells as a lovely note of colour against the landscape—with again a standing trousered boy and seated companions; or whether we prefer his more elaborate compositions, we are impressed with the painter's special fitness to render the artless graces of childhood. We have such a group also in "The Raymond Symon Family." The children are older here. The sisters and their two brothers are not so agreeably grouped as to do full justice to Hoppner's taste and skill, but as a piece of painting and colour the picture is to be highly considered, and as an evidence of the artist's well-known ability in the delineation of dogs it is otherwise interesting. Still better for juvenile characterization is "Lady Anne Lambton and her Children" (two boys and two girls, all young children—the elder boy drawing a sword on his startled sister) which was exhibited in 1798 and was mezzotinted by Young as "Domestic Happiness." The children are admirable, and the arrangement would be wholly excellent but that the mother keeps guard over her little ones with the dramatic action of the Tragic Muse. In such pictures as these Hoppner

"The Setting Sun" Plate 100

"The Raymond Symon Family" Plate 99

encroached little on the style of others. But in his pretty picture of a tiny English damsel, "Countess Poulett," he comes so near to the "Thomas Fane" of Romney that the resemblance, superficial as it is, can hardly be accidental. Looking at this we are not surprised that pictures by Hoppner have been sold as Romney's many a time. The portrait is simplicity itself, yet there is in it the witchery of baby maidenhood. The blot upon it is the curious failure in the rendering of the dog, which looks almost as much like a pig; yet we can overlook the defect in the appeal unconsciously made by the child.

"Countess Poulett" Plate 97

In the painting of women Hoppner succeeded best when he withstood the prevailing fashion for the pseudo-classic. "Mrs. Jerningham as 'Hebe,'" a great full-length in active communion with an eagle emerging from the clouds; and even Miss Grimston represented in a picture painted in 1803 with the characteristic title of "Psyche's Return from the Infernal Regions with the Box of Beauty," are apt to be tiresome nowadays judged as conceptions, however much they may have tickled the taste of the day when a superficial acquaintance with the classics was considered an essential element of polite education and good breeding. We do not actually object to the box held by Psyche (Miss Grimston) especially as there is nothing really classic about the lady beyond the title arbitrarily imposed upon her, but we should willingly sacrifice it in favour of a more pleasingly drawn arm. But when Hoppner chose to be natural he could be very delightful. Lady Coote of Donnybrook, wife of the second baronet, was painted in 1797 when Hoppner's reputation was at its height; her portrait helped to sustain it, for there is a quiet unaffectedness about the figure which, seen in black against the felicitous richly-coloured landscape background, makes a very good design. The glove is not happy; at a little distance it looks like the real hand dreadfully prolonged through a malformation. Here, as in the portrait of "The Duchess of Sutherland," the head of which it greatly resembles, there is a sincerity of sentiment that is extremely refreshing. In this respect Hoppner had advanced, but at considerable sacrifice beyond the sentiment expressed a couple of years before in "The Sisters," as "The Daughters of Sir Thomas Frankland" is generally called. But once we allow the deliberateness of the arrangement we need not stint our admiration for the beautiful group which touches perhaps the artist's high-water-mark of dignified sweetness. These charming girls were the granddaughters (not the daughters as is usually stated) of Admiral Sir Thomas Frankland, the descendant of Oliver Cromwell; the younger sister died in 1795, the year in which the picture was exhibited, and the other, five years later. They had stirred the painter to his fullest power and to the production of his masterpiece of composition and illumination, betraying in it no trace of trick or mannerism, no showy display of "slick" brushwork or flashy colour

"Lady Coote" Plate 96

"The Daughters of Sir Thomas Frankland" Plate 98

or manipulation. Some would have us believe that Hoppner was a past master in the gentle art of flattery, and so was the more appreciated in an age that placed the graces above truth, prettiness above character, and decorative charm above everything. According to Northcote, "Hoppner frequently remarked that in painting ladies' portraits he used to make as beautiful a face as he could, then give it a likeness to the sitter, working down from this beautiful state until the bystanders should cry out, 'Oh! I see a likeness coming!' whereupon he then stopped, and never ventured to make it more like." This seems strange doing in a man who is said to have expressed his wonder at Reynolds's cool audacity in sending home pictures which had not the slightest resemblance to the sitters. It may, of course, be true; but at least there is no indication of flattery in "The Sisters." It would not matter if there were, for the chief beauty of the picture is in its general disposition, its dignified grace of pose, and its glowing yet sober loveliness of colour. The handling, it may be insisted, is unaffected, and is not technically so effective, "advanced," and interesting as in the half-length "Portrait of Mrs. Pearson" which takes its place at perhaps the head of Hoppner's achievement in point of view of execution, but it is admirably adapted to the sentiment of the picture. The general scheme, with carefully reversed arrangement, was adapted by the artist to his group of "Ladies Catherine and Sarah Bligh," which, although a very effective scheme in light and shade, failed to approach the Frankland sisters as a sympathetic rendering of girlhood.

For absolute sincerity we must look rather to the male portraits, in Hoppner as in every fashionable painter. His State portraits, no doubt, savoured of flattery; and the great full-length of "The Earl of Carlisle" in his Garter robes is a picturesque yet not a very impressive production of this kind. It is, however, distanced by the vigorous three-quarter-length study of "The Marquess of Thomond" as a Knight of St. Patrick. In such pictures Hoppner was acknowledged as richer in effect than Lawrence and gifted with a greater power of insight into character, although he may not show so much "infernal facility." In his ordinary half-lengths we realize in him the thoughful painter—in his "Mr. George Cholmley" of Whitby Abbey, for example, in which there is no attempt to show off, as, indeed, in some of his Royal portraits, such as "The Duke of Kent," now in the possession of his Majesty the German Emperor. William Gifford, George Hibbert, and other men of thought and character, were painted simply but with quiet force, and are wholly satisfactory even though a little heavy. Hoppner could paint too, in a lighter vein, as in the handsome likeness of "Lord Henry Fitzgerald as 'Don Felix' in 'The Wonder'"—a fancy picture of great charm and directness; and on occasion he could be intensely pathetic as in his three-quarter-length

"Mr. George Cholmley" Plate 101

portrait of "Warren Hastings." This is a head that moves us to keen sympathy; it is what the French call "penetrating" in character; and the work would stand on a very high plane but for the poor drawing of the figure from the waist downwards. Set beside the similar portrait by Lawrence it triumphs by its insight, its sympathy, and its depth of feeling; but the painter's interest and his art seem to have left him when the effort upon the head was expended. Were his drawing not so often at fault Hoppner would now be more highly esteemed. In his own day it did not so much matter; his employers evidently cared more for attractiveness and richness of aspect than for a severe correctness which their untrained eye would probably not have appreciated.

When Lawrence was patronized by the King, Hoppner withdrew into the rival Court—being openly nominated Portrait-painter to the Prince of Wales in 1793—and the correctness of Lawrence's work and the relative looseness of Hoppner's might be taken as symbolical of the two parties the painters severally and officially served. Nevertheless, Hoppner might have said, as Sir Peter Lely had done—"Anyhow, I'm the best you've got;" and to the best of his abilities he sustained the credit and the traditions of his school.

With Hoppner's death the decorative tendency that marked the portraiture of the final years of the eighteenth century may be said to have flickered out among the more prominent painters. But there were still a few belated professors of the old school as there were of the still older school of Francis Hayman. His tradition was naturally maintained for a time by his disciples, but even they, or the more independent among them, abandoned it as soon as they felt sufficient strength to respond to the public demand for change. Of these pupils one of the most promising was Lemuel Francis Abbott who, during a brief career cut short by early madness and death—due in some measure to conscientiousness in attempting to carry out entirely with his own hand the many commissions that rained in upon him—produced one or two portraits which have ensured him a good place in the second rank. To this measure of immortality the importance of his sitters' personality has in considerable degree contributed. His early stiffness in arrangement and pose, seen in his three-quarter-length group at the National Portrait Gallery of "The Earl of Macartney and his Secretary, Sir George Staunton," of 1784, and his equally awkward "Viscount Bridport," may have been a legacy from Hayman; in any case the emptiness of it is his own. But he soon warmed up into truer life and his heads soon came to be appreciated for the faithfulness of the likeness. Before he found himself entirely he inspired himself with Romney, as is sufficiently proved by his "Cowper" in a nightcap, and "Nollekens" leaning on his bust of Fox, in the manner of Romney's "Flaxman and Hayley." But

Lemuel F. Abbott

we feel his individuality proclaim itself in two of his best portraits. The first of these is "Sir William Herschel," the astronomer, which is not only technically sound but searching in character. In such pictures Abbott could sometimes excel; but in his full-length portraits he was usually stilted and unsatisfactory. The backgrounds are tasteless and badly managed, and we feel that the large canvas is beyond his powers—and that the artist was painfully aware of the fact. His shadows were often too brown, but his hatching in the flesh tints found frank favour with his fellow craftsmen. As the painter of "Admiral Lord Nelson" Abbott is best remembered, and deserves our gratitude, for he beyond any other, except Hoppner, has best recorded the features of the hero of Trafalgar. Perhaps he was more at his ease when painting the sailor—for Abbott specialized in the portraits of naval officers—than when he sat down before men of other avocations. In any case he has given us in the several pictures in which he has recorded the features of Nelson a pleasing likeness which claims our confidence, even though it seems to suppress the touch of the devil in the man. With these portraits may be grouped the fine "Henry Byrne" in the National Gallery, failing though it now is in the flesh tones, and the "Warren Hastings" in the possession of the Earl of Northbrook. This study reveals a quiet, powerful personality not yet approaching the years of senility such as we see in Hoppner's and Lawrence's canvases. But immeasurably superior to these in every way is the portrait of "Matthew Boulton" at Birmingham, which may be considered as the painter's unquestionable masterpiece. Indeed, so good is it that one might feel justified in doubting the authorship, so subtle are execution and modelling, so brilliant the rendering of character and expression. There is a facility here in full measure, and a painter-like grasp as well, that we do not recognize in the other portraits; but when we come to the poorly rendered hands we are reminded that Abbott could only be regarded as a head painter. This incident alone may be held to strengthen the judgement of those who, in spite of its difference of treatment, have placed to the credit of his account this remarkable study. It was exhibited in the National Loan Collection at South Kensington in 1867, and has since been publicly shown. Again, the portrait of Valentine Green, the engraver, is a very competent and conscientious rendering of the features but, as in the case of the "Herschel" and certain other portraits, the body seems scarcely strong enough to support its height. Abbott's art was thus restricted to narrow limits, and moreover, as if to make confession of his limitations, he so rarely attempted a female portrait, that his "Mary Verney, Baroness Fermanagh" is the only one of which there seems to be any record in the public exhibitions.

"Sir William Herschel" Plate 103

"Admiral Lord Nelson" Plate 102

The painting of women, of course, requires certain gifts of tact, patience,

taste, and sympathy, and of lightness of hand and touch in which Abbott must have felt himself deficient, and he wisely abstained. John Opie for some years, at least during the lifetime of his first wife, had certain limitations in the same direction; but he did not abstain. He painted the portraits of as many ladies as he could get commissions for, but the character of his talent and his vigorous temperament led him occasionally into imparting such masculinity to his fair sitters as to make us wonder if they are not men in disguise. His "Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin" of 1795, in the National Portrait Gallery is a case in point. This literary lady, who was wife to the poet Shelley, may perhaps be truly enough represented, for her views on marriage and on women's rights, and her imagination brilliantly inclined to the horrible, do not badly fit the face of Opie's picture. But the hardness of its expression and form are accentuated by the breadth of execution and the strength of light and shade. There is far greater delicacy of treatment in the very similarly-posed "Martha Nicholls, of Rosedale," afterwards Lady St. Aubyn, in the possession of Mr. Carl Meyer, painted at about this time; but there is a refined softness in the lady's complexion and expression and an airiness about her dress and hair —both of which are in the Gainsborough fashion—which have compelled a sweetness of treatment not usual with him. We are told that after his second marriage, to Miss Alderson, who fell in love with him at first sight, as he with her, her influence tempered his vigour when painting women. This can hardly be true because he did not marry Amelia Opie until the year 1798, and we have the portrait of "Mrs. George Warde" in disproof. This beautiful picture, which was specially selected for the Franco-British Exhibition in 1908 is one of the tenderest, best arranged, and most graceful of all Opie's portraits of ladies. The creamy white dress is deliciously supported by the blue ribbons of the hat—not so fine a blue as Hoppner's, still less fine than Gainsborough's; still a very lovely colour harmonizing exquisitely with the flesh tints.

John Opie, R.A.

"Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin" Plate 106

"Mrs. George Warde" Plate 105

Both of these pictures illustrate a peculiarity in Opie—his fondness of lighting his portraits from the right. The rule is not invariable with him, but in the majority of his pictures which I have seen it is the system he prefers. We see it again in his "Portrait of himself" in the National Gallery of Scotland, on loan from Mr. Brownlie Hunter. It is not easy to identify all the auto-portraits of Opie, for he painted himself more than twenty times, but I have no doubt that this is the picture which was bequeathed to the Brompton Hospital for Consumption in 1871. It is a strong and manly piece of work, freely and vigorously painted, and with its determined expression, its strong straight nose, its finely sensual mouth, and its keen glance, it has a dramatic touch that compels the attention of the spectator. Opie loved to indulge in strong light and shade, sometimes so violent in character that the picture, in

"John Opie, R.A., by Himself Plate 104

spite of its colour, almost gives the impression of a black-and-white. Perhaps his portrait of the melodramatic "Henry Fuseli, R.A." is the most striking instance of the peculiarity which can be pointed to. Indeed, the idea is sometimes suggested to us as we look at these powerfully lighted works, that in this particular they inspired, or at least encouraged, Frank Holl to emphasize the character of his sitters and to bring them forward into startling prominence.

Opie was discovered by "Peter Pindar"—Dr. Wolcot, of whom he painted at least seven portraits, and probably more—and brought to London as a prodigy to astonish the town. Not without reason he was called "The Cornish Wonder" by the cognoscenti, for while still a child and entirely self-taught he exhibited a talent for portrait painting that was nothing short of astounding. He became the rage of the town, and until the furore gradually worked itself out, his studio was crowded from morning to night by would-be sitters. King George III bestowed his patronage upon him as early as 1782—the year in which was produced the "Mrs. George Warde," that extraordinary performance for a lad of twenty-one. The first Royal commission was for a portrait of Mrs. Delany, now or lately at Hampton Court, a sort of replica of which is in the National Portrait Gallery—a fine study of old age, which was pronounced "like Rembrandt." Sir Joshua Reynolds was one of the first to pay generous tribute to the young artist—who perhaps was not aware that the warmth of the President's appreciation sometimes carried him farther than a calmer judgement would allow. To Northcote, on his return from Italy in 1780, Reynolds is reported to have said: "Ah, my dear Sir, you may go back: there is a wondrous Cornishman who is carrying everything before him. He is like Caravaggio and Velazquez in one." No wonder that poor Northcote declared, "I was ready to sink into the earth." Opie's strong illumination was certainly not wholly unlike that of the Italian in intensity, and his bold brushwork might at a glance suggest his devotion to the Spaniard; but we might doubt the seriousness of Reynolds's description had we not read of his extravagant laudation of other painters. Opie's London critics doubtless missed any trace of juvenile, tentative handling to be expected in a young man's work, for his brush was authoritative from the first, and his drawing firm, intelligently reproducing form with fidelity and ease. But that Reynolds could see any real stylistic resemblance to Velazquez is incomprehensible. Yet Benjamin West was almost equally impressed: "He painted," he said, "what he saw in the most masterly manner, and he varied little from it. He saw Nature in one point more distinctly and forcibly than any painter that ever lived. The truth of colour, as conveyed to the eye through the atmosphere, by which the distance of every object is ascertained, was never better expressed than by him"—and so on, insisting also on his "perfect uniformity of proportion."

But the praise by which he was met did not turn Opie's head; nor on the other hand did it serve continuously to keep his studio fully employed. Unfortunately, of West's testimony of Opie's colour and his atmospheric qualities we have little means of judging, for Opie was reckless in using treacherous pigments which have destroyed, at least in part, the charms to which he testifies. "Egyptian-brown" or asphaltum he would literally put on with a trowel, for he loved tone; and the result has been disastrous. But it is true that in him the love of colour was allied to a passion for breadth and force, so that, considering that he was endowed also with a pretty fancy in the scheming of subject pictures, the enthusiasm with which he was met in his own day is easily to be understood. Moreover, his broad brush-work, in which he resembled Romney, and his honest search for structural forms, in which he resembled few, won him the respect of his brother artists. He was no more than twenty-six when he was elected into the Royal Academy and in the following year he was promoted to full membership. He painted in all over five hundred heads in addition to his historical works, and when he died—two years before Hoppner—there was a chorus of regret and of admiration, and on all hands the kindliest judgement was expressed of the man and of the artist.

George Morland

It may be said that George Morland's career as a portrait painter is mainly to be identified with the numerous commissions for portraits he received and never executed. There is no doubt that his sensitive, irritable nature debarred him from becoming a fashionable portraitist, partly because he was ill at ease in very polite society and partly because he could not brook the criticisms and suggestions of unintelligent sitters which wiser, more prudent, and more patient men school themselves to accept at their true value and dismiss with a courtly appearance of acquiescence. He preferred to paint the subjects he chose and to be at no man's or woman's beck and call in respect of his work and its details. Morland, therefore, never became a portraitist in the ordinary sense of the term, although a certain number of portraits are to be credited to him in the earlier portion of his career. We know, or at least we have every reason to believe, that he must have painted the excellent head of his father's "Laundry Maid" belonging to Mr. Pierpont Morgan, for the picture was exhibited under the name of the father and son, and the difference between this and the other similar pictures by Henry Morland lies especially in the head. There is here a tender firmness and vigour of feeling rather than of execution, and an appreciation of facial contours, that show an early familiarity with the principles of portraiture on which even "fancy portraits," such as this, must be based. On the other hand, the rather brilliant and showy head of a young gallant which used to be exhibited under Morland's name as an auto-portrait at the South Kensington Museum was manifestly not from his

hand: I drew attention to the false attribution some years ago and it was subsequently withdrawn. In the summer of 1785 Morland was invited by a Mrs. Hill, a lady of wealth and distinguished connection, to her house at Margate to paint a number of portraits of members of her family and her friends. Among his many sitters there was Lord Loughborough. These numerous early commissions kept him busy, and he executed them to the satisfaction of his patrons; in a letter to his friend Philip Dawe he also mentions a sketch portrait of Voltaire which he had to finish at a single sitting of an hour and a half. Among the several portraits of himself that exist one is the life-size half-length—his left arm thrown over a chair and his right resting upon a table close to a tell-tale bottle and glass: the picture he presented to the lady he wished to marry but who, spying the bottle, shrewdly refused him and kept the picture. The other is in the National Portrait Gallery; it represents himself as a youth painting and shows his skill and firmness even at this early age. In this we see the teaching of his father; in his much later picture of his studio, with its chill interior and sordid appointments, we recognize consummate painter-like quality and the Hogarthian sentiment. And we recognize him again as the principal figure in the "Interior of a Country Ale House." Both of these have the true spirit of the conversation-piece, and possess an interest of "intimacy" quite distinct from that of portraiture pure and simple. Morland was, in fact, always a picture-maker and kept the publisher and engraver within his purview. We see it in "The Fortune Teller: a Portrait Group" at the National Gallery. It is simple and strong in its colour-scheme, with its red coat and its green walls and table, and it is painted in the tradition of Hogarth, but modified by the sentiment of Wheatley and Rowlandson; and although his wife, his sister, and other members of his family as well as his friends served him as models, and he abided by actual portraiture only so far as suited his purpose, we see it in the charming and graceful picture before us, which is brushed in with so much facility and beauty of touch. We see it in the very original and dainty group of three ladies, engraved under the title of "Black, Brown, and Fair," representing recognizable likenesses of his sister, his wife, and his sister-in-law, Miss Ward, sister of James Ward, R.A. Indeed, his wife is to be met with in many of his pleasing subject pictures—hers is the pretty face and figure which is regarded as Morland's "type of beauty." This he had by heart, of course, and he painted it in with little of that characterization which is essential to true portraiture. The faces are painted more or less according to formula, with a full, fat brush and without those telling accents, for the most part, which are never absent from the conversation-pieces of Hogarth. The kinship between the two masters is more in technique than in taste, for Hogarth was

"The Fortune Teller" Plate 107

always aiming at character, Morland at charm of effect. He would place his servant Simpson in a winter landscape and call it a portrait, yet the chief interest of the picture is not in the figure, and certainly not in the face. But the life-size profile portraits of "Mr. Mercer" and "Miss Mercer," painted as we are told "by Morland when he was in the rules of the Bench," come within the true category. So does that surprising "Portrait of a Boy," reproduced in the biography of the painter by George Dawe, R.A., which is so masterly and delicate, almost vague in its suggestive modelling, and yet throbbing with life, and so astonishingly modern that we are tempted to class it both in conception and realization with the work of Whistler or Maris. It is such a picture as this that justifies the inclusion here of the wayward genius, for it discloses an almost unsuspected vein of poetic insight into the inner personality of the sitter with which Morland has rarely if ever been credited.

Gainsborough Dupont

The Gainsborough tradition came as a natural heritage to Gainsborough Dupont, the master's nephew, pupil, and assistant. It cannot, therefore, be charged against him that he was in the true sense a copyist. Nevertheless, the fact remains that this young man, who began to exhibit with great credit at the Royal Academy in 1790 when he was twenty-three—having already scraped some of the finest mezzotints of the period—and died seven years later, executed a number of portraits that have been mistaken for his uncle's work. In the words of Frederick Seguier, "it seems strange that a man who could paint so well as Dupont is not better known. He imitated Gainsborough's light sketchy style of painting to perfection; but in comparing their works it will be seen that the dark lines intended to express the upper lids of the eyes are darker and heavier than Gainsborough's similar touches; then, again, he exaggerated Gainsborough's chalky or wiry manner of painting the hair." If this is all the difference between them, this passage is a powerful tribute to the youthful master. The writer adds "Gainsborough left some unfinished pictures which were afterwards completed in a most masterly manner by his nephew Dupont." This is true; indeed, when Gainsborough died in 1788 there were not only unfinished pictures but twelve completed canvases in his studio. One of these was "The Marsham Family;" two of them were "Mr. Pitt" and "Mr. W. Grenville." Without imputing any charge against Dupont, for the explanation may be a simple one, I must point out that two years later he exhibited portraits of "Mr. Pitt" and "Mr. W. Grenville" at the Royal Academy. Did these gentlemen sit again to him so soon after they were painted by Gainsborough himself? That they were dissatisfied with the master's last completed work is perhaps the explanation. And in 1794 Dupont showed a full-length portrait of King George "very similar to Gainsborough's" but with a difference in the accessories of hat and cloak. Indeed, in the works

properly attributed to Dupont we cannot but recognize the faithfulness of the artist to the teaching which had been instilled into him, and we cannot wonder that some of his works should pass nowadays under the name of Gainsborough.

At the beginning of his independent career he enjoyed influential support. He painted the portraits of "Lord Grenville," "Lord Mornington," of "Sir James Sanderson, Lord Mayor," and from the Elder Brethren of Trinity House he had the commission to execute a large group of the Masters for which he was paid £500. After this, however, he turned his attention towards the theatre and painted many of the leading actors and actresses in character. The Garrick Club possesses ten of these pictures, in which the resemblance to Gainsborough has in a great measure disappeared. But there is evidence enough in them of consummate ability to prove that Dupont would have risen very high in his profession had he lived, for he possessed the gift not only of grace, elegance, and lightness of touch, but sufficient insight into the characteristics of men and women to present them at their most interesting and their best.

Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A.

If Opie is described as a prodigy, what are we to say of Thomas Lawrence? Opie, for years his redoubtable rival, had burst upon the public as a full-fledged artist whose advance had been amazingly rapid but only in a limited sense abnormal. Lawrence on the other hand was an "infant phenomenon" more marvellous than had ever been recorded within these shores before. A mere toddle who can draw recognizable likenesses, a baby of five or six who can extort admiration for his portraits, a child of nine who experiences all the pangs of jealousy and humiliation before a picture of Rubens, and despairingly exclaims "I shall never paint like that" (and he was right), a boy of ten who is a professional pastel portrait-painter at Oxford, a youth who, after a little "advice" from William Hoare, R.A., of Bath, enters as the youngest student of all in the Royal Academy schools and has little or nothing of his craft to learn from either fellow-pupils or teachers, is no ordinary "prodigy." We find him in professional practice and an exhibitor of seven portraits at the Royal Academy before he actually entered the schools, being then seventeen years of age; three years afterwards the painter of the "Miss Farren," of which Sir Joshua Reynolds exclaimed "This young man begins where I leave off!" and of the great double full-length of "John J. Angerstein and his Wife," which now represents him in the Louvre. The following year, when he was but two and twenty, he was elected Associate of the Royal Academy and, on the death of Reynolds, appointed Principal Painter in drawing to the King; the following year, he became painter to the Dilettanti Society, also in succession to Reynolds, and two years after that in his twenty-fifth year, full Academician. Is there any wonder that the foolish father of so extraordinary a lad, whose powers he

was exploiting for profit at home (as he did to the end of his life), should have rejected the offer of a would-be benefactor to send the young genius to Rome, replying that his son's talents did not need cultivation and that he would not cramp his genius by study or instruction? But for that ill-advised complacency Lawrence might possibly have won a place beside or close to Reynolds, and he might have learned early how to paint flesh instead of china, as he himself practically admitted later on. As things turned out, he became brilliant, ultra-brilliant, but never really great. He said himself when he was only thirteen, before coming to London, that "No one but Reynolds could match him in a head;" and a partizan declared that "the wantonness of Hoppner, the woodenness of Opie, and the elegance of Gainsborough" did not frighten him. His self-confidence was not less wonderful than his precocity; but it was a confidence that listened patiently to criticism even if he did not follow it.

So when Lawrence arrived in the metropolis and presented his letters of introduction which were honoured with more than ordinary generosity, he was already victor in spirit; and by the time that he had obtained the Royal favour and, when he was but one-and-twenty, had painted the two full-length portraits of the King and Queen for Lord Macartney to present to the Emperor of China, his studio was becoming thronged with the rank, wealth, fashion, and beauty of the land and, as Thornbury picturesquely put it, "the air of Jermyn Street grew yellow with the flying swarms of guineas." His enthusiasm for himself was communicated to the *beau monde* and the flame leaped up higher and ever higher until the end of his life. The excellent opinion which he entertained of his own abilities he made no secret of; he was only six-and-twenty when, in a letter to a correspondent he wrote: "I found her [Lady Hamilton] in town, too much engaged to give me the time I wished for and was necessary but I must put it down to a good motive, viz., the gratitude to Mr. Romney, whose portraits of her are feeble,—more show the artist's feebleness than *her* grandeur. This assertion to one who has been accustomed to hear me speak my mind I trust will not appear impudent." But it *is* impudent, in spite of the fact that there is a good deal of truth in it; nevertheless when we look at his portrait of "the ineffable lady," belonging to Mr. Evelyn Ashley, we are not inclined to sweep Romney off the face of the earth with quite so contemptuous a flourish of the pen.

In these days when an artist is judged by the quality of his work, and not simply by its effect, we are apt to disparage, perhaps unduly, the art of Lawrence. We are inclined to set down to mere collectors' whim the esteem in which he is held to-day in "the market" and to deprecate the misplaced enthusiasm of his own day which carried him on the crest of its advancing wave for over forty years. His vogue, we know, was such that he had to

establish a factory, *à la* Rubens, where his pupils and assistants—Hargreaves, Harlow, and the rest—were kept at work laying in his pictures and working up draperies, jewels, epaulettes, and crowns, on which he would touch, going from picture to picture. It is these school-paintings that we usually recognize as his worst productions, pictures that are lacking almost wholly in that "quality" which he tried, at least, to secure, though not often obtained, in his own unaided work.

It must be admitted that the charm by which Lawrence dazzled his contemporaries was very fascinating and very real. He had refinement to a degree practically unknown in any previous oil painter—an ultra-refinement that gave rise to the charge of his being only a "lady's man," in spite of a certain virility which on the whole cannot be denied him. He was, in fact, the Exquisite in painting—the "Nosegay Macaroni," the ill-natured critic might be tempted to call him. But he was endowed with far greater gifts. In his treatment of portraiture he was a creator, in the sense that Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Raeburn were creators. He showed us a new view unlike anything that had gone before. It might not be great, but it was novel—an invention; and, indeed, in his few masterpieces he sometimes approaches to greatness. Moreover, his draughtsmanship was as accomplished as himself—which is the reason why the French critics set him beside our greatest artists as their peer: for fine draughtsmanship and elegance appeal to them even more than colour. His drawing was admirable in the parts as in the whole: as Fuseli declared explosively, almost as soon as Lawrence had come to town: "By G—d! he draws eyes better than Titian!" Had his purity of drawing possessed in equal degree the quality of "style" how great he might have been! But he always makes you feel, as it were, the exquisite finely-pointed pencil throughout. You forget the person painted for the attraction of the drawing. It is Lawrence's fault, not the spectator's. While Reynolds in his portraits thought of the general effect and depended mainly on chiaroscuro, Lawrence thought of his draughtsmanship, of resemblance, and of the true local colour of the parts—and makes you feel it. So as his sum total he has only brilliancy to vie with the mellow sweetness of Reynolds, with the result, as someone has said, that when we look at Lawrence's portraits we are always charmed, but never satisfied. That is to say, Lawrence sparkled where he might have shone, and the power of his effulgence, unlike Reynolds's, has failed to pierce through the century that has followed. He began, it is true, by seeking to obtain the richness of effect of the Titianesque palette, but soon abandoned the "golden scale" in favour of the pure bright tones of colour as seen in the white light of the English climate and in English nature. Herein he had logic on his side. But what he gained in local truth he lost in broadly

considered beauty, for in general his colour became mediocre and poor in quality. However brilliant, therefore, his pictures may be they too often look "tinny" and more superficial than they are. This tinniness of effect was partly due to the modes and fashions of the day and his whole-hearted acceptance of them. It was "*bon ton*" for everybody to oil their hair, which ladies and children wore in ringlets; and velvet was widely used. The result is that Lawrence seized on the accents of light that appeared dotted all over the head and dress, on the broken folds of the velvet robes and puffed sleeves; and he added further artificial brilliancy in the white dots in the eyes and on the nose. With ladies the eyes and hair are usually too black, the lights too white, the lips too red, and the effect visibly pushed forcibly into intensity. There are too many spangles about. Those well-drawn eyes, so expressive and sparkling!—they are the chief features of his faces; and that oily hair, in men often swept in with the smear which Lawrence appears to have invented, till the unkempt heads seem to be covered with tufts of fur.

Richness of imagination in bountiful measure cannot be denied to Lawrence, and this he expressed, as Howard declared, with extraordinary force and vivacity of effect. Of course, he could paint low in tone, occasionally but not often; we see it in the portrait of "Princess Charlotte" releasing a canary. And he could paint solidly at times, as in the pretty "Princess Amelia," of 1790, with its playfulness of fancy and sweetness of expression. With ladies and children he succeeded best, but his men have not enough of the sterner stuff to make them real. They are as animated as you please, but they don't think. They may be full of elegance and grace, but have little nobility or dignity—the thought, majesty, and intellect that Reynolds could depict whenever he met them, or supply when he did not, Lawrence could not rise to. Of all the kings, warriors, and statesmen whom he painted for the Waterloo Gallery at Windsor Castle how many, besides Lord Liverpool, are made to reveal their real strength of character and vigour of intellect? In almost every case it is the person and not the personality that we are shown—the person whose clothes proclaim almost as much emotional individuality as the face. It seems surprising to us, therefore, that so many of Lawrence's contemporaries, not satisfied with placing him beside the greatest masters of Britain, enthusiastically claimed for him equality with Vandyck, Titian, and Velazquez. From such a verdict Lawrence would scarce seek to dissuade them.

It has acutely been said that had Lawrence been an architect instead of a painter he would have preferred the Corinthian Order to the Doric. He was in fact discreetly showy, and loved beauty of the pretty unreflective sort, so that good looks became quite common in the land when Lawrence appeared

upon the scene. He has been called "the flatterer of the great;" but the writer who records the saying justly points out that this is hardly fair, as he was only putting into practice the advice of Reynolds, not to follow the vulgar error of making people too much like themselves. So he marked the difference by making them more refined, better bred, and better looking, and seldom so vulgar as to be guilty of sturdy manliness. And if we would appreciate the service he rendered to the art of his day—he whose good taste and purity of sentiment never failed him in the painting of women—we need but compare the spirit in which he has imagined the Court beauties he has preserved for us with that which inspired Sir Peter Lely in the Hampton Court series of ladies in all the voluptuous amorousness of their seductive charms.

So Lawrence was besieged by all who admired his unrivalled power of making fine ladies and fine gentlemen out of the most unpromising materials, and out of promising materials producing creatures of unheard-of elegance, beauty, and refinement as then understood in Court circles. His large prices were no deterrent—his studio was always crowded; and when Hoppner died, leaving only Beechey against him in relatively feeble rivalry, he promptly put up his scale to an unprecedented height. He now charged a hundred guineas for a head and four hundred for a full-length; and when he was elected President of the Royal Academy in 1820 after his triumphant campaign in Aix-la-Chapelle, Vienna, and Rome (where he had been treated with practically ambassadorial honours) he advanced them still farther, until the public, moth-like, were equally dazzled and attracted by them. He demanded two hundred guineas for a head or "three-quarter canvas;" three hundred for a kit-cat; four hundred for a half-length; five hundred for a "Bishop's half-length," six hundred for a full-length—the price Mr. Lambton, afterwards the Earl of Durham, paid for the sentimental portrait of his son. Seven hundred guineas had to be given for an "extra full length;" while for such a group as the beautiful and ever popular "Lady Gower and her Daughter" the artist asked and obtained fifteen hundred guineas.

But when he died Lawrence's reputation passed through a long period of eclipse such as the most eminent painters for a time have had to suffer. It is true that at his death sale in 1831 his portrait of himself realized £493; but after that for forty years no picture of his touched two hundred pounds with the sole exception of "The Sons of W. H. Pattison, Esq." (of 1817)—the picture better known as "Rural Amusements"—which capped that amount by ten pounds. Then the obscuration began to pass away. In 1872 "Mrs. Baring and Children" brought £1,470, in 1886 "The Children of Charles B. Calmady, Esq."—universally celebrated as "The Calmady Children," or "Nature," the title under which it was engraved—realized £1,890. In 1896

a thousand guineas were paid for the "Portrait of Mme. Sabloukoff and family," a record price for a pastel; in 1904 "Miss Farren" passed from the collection of Mr. L. Neumann to that of Mr. Pierpont Morgan for two thousand guineas; and three years later Mr. Charles Wertheimer bought the famous "Julia, Countess of Jersey"—an affected, abnormally intelligent little girl, who clearly knows a great deal more than is good for her, seated in a landscape with her dog in her lap—for eight thousand guineas. Here we see the taste of that class of collector who looks for superficial attractiveness rather than for solid artistic excellence; for no one will pretend that these varying prices have any true relation to the quality in the pictures named. The cult of these buyers is not primarily the cult of art but the cult of infantile and especially female loveliness, and the love of

> "A perfect woman, nobly planned
> To warn, to comfort, and command."

But as regards perfection, and in what it consists, that must remain a matter of taste, reinforced by the rivalry of the purse. So Lawrence, once the darling of society, has become to-day a darling of the collector who never seems to realize that Lawrence has nothing of the poet about him; that he usually painted in cold blood, without emotion; and who never thinks to address to him the sentiment of the poet's lines—

> "And you may love the woman's form
> But I the woman's heart."

And yet when all is criticised and judged Lawrence at his best is a very delightful and individual painter and an astonishing virtuoso; and when we look abroad at the state of the arts throughout the continent during the latter half of his career we cannot be surprised that he was acclaimed by his admirers as "the first portrait-painter in Europe." It was a claim that met with little opposition or denial. At that time there was freshness as well as richness about his work, and his originality of treatment and purity of handling formed a novelty that was bound to make a great impression. "Miss Elizabeth Farren," the picture already alluded to, was his trumpet-summons to the art world to herald his coming and to demand recognition as a candidate to the highest place and the highest honours. The claim was allowed almost without parley or discussion. A few critics there were who cavilled at the fact that the lady (who, by the way, had sat to Lawrence three years before) should be dressed in a furred John coat and carry a large fur muff in the summer season —which is indicated by the charming Lawrentian landscape—as if we had no cold summers in England! And they compared the picture, of course to Lawrence's detriment, with Reynolds's "Mrs. Billington as St. Cecilia." The

"Miss Elizabeth Farren" Plate 108

habit of painting important pictures of leading actresses for the exhibitions has almost gone out of fashion in England; but a century ago it was still rife and the public keenly criticised the portraits of their favourites. This lady, "The Muse of Comedy," had succeeded the *pimpante* Mrs. Abington in all her principal parts; she was said to be "as good as she was beautiful" and in a few years' time was to become the Countess of Derby; and it was generally considered that she had greatly honoured the young painter by lending him, as it were, her popularity for his advancement. It was therefore greatly resented that the picture should have been exhibited as the "Portrait of an actress," curtly put; but the painter was able to show that the fault was none of his, and in due course, after a battle about the price, Lord Derby purchased the picture at the enhanced cost of one hundred guineas. The correspondence that ensued proves that Lawrence took up the picture again two years later to "make it a little *fatter*, at all events, diminish the *bend* you are so attached to," as Miss Farren expressed it. It therefore no longer looks "so thin in the figure and broke off in the middle"; while as for the "bend," it is only that which prevents us challenging the painter's originality and comparing the conception with Romney's "Mrs. Jordan as Peggy, the Romp, in 'The Country Girl.'"

To Lawrence fell another honour, the election to the Dilettanti Society, in spite of his ineligibility through his not having travelled beyond the Alps. The rule was waived for him just as the Royal Academy had waived its rule by electing him when under age: rules, it was implied, were not made for geniuses such as he. He thus succeeded to the post of official painter to the Society and produced three good portraits of its members "Richard Payne Knight," the numismatist, "Thomas, Baron Dundas," and "Sir Henry Englefield," the first and last of which were shown at the Royal Academy. Thenceforward all would have been plain-sailing but for the artist's unfortunate habit of accepting more commissions than he could carry out and of contracting more debts than he could discharge. His painting career, nevertheless, suffered little check, and he turned out at great speed portraits of men and women of rank and of high professional standing and troubled little about the criticisms of men like the caustic "Anthony Pasquin" and ignored the sting of his denunciations, such as that beginning "Mr. Lawrence began his professional career on a false and delusive principle; his portraits were delicate, but not true." Lawrence, in spite of his declaration to the contrary, never swerved by a hair's breadth for criticism from anyone; except on the occasion already mentioned. When Pasquin declared that the painting of a robe was so china-like that if you threw a stone at it it would shiver to pieces, Lawrence was placid, above criticism as he was above rules, and so he headed straight for the second rank in art. When the paroxysms with which Bonaparte had torn the face of Europe

had become allayed, Lawrence, as has been said, was commissioned by the Prince Regent at the painter's own terms—five hundred guineas for large whole lengths and a thousand pounds for loss of time, etc.—to paint the chief actors in the great historical drama. And so we have the Wellingtons, Blucher, Metternich, the Allied Sovereigns, the Pope, and the other striking portraits, which gave the artist much trouble although he approached them without fear. Writing of "the Fag" which the Wellington was to him, he comments, "'tis hard to toil and struggle for some subtle refinement of a Tone or harmony of Lines that shall unite a whole, where the *Parts* have been of arduous execution, in order to meet the prompt decision of one rapid glance of Ignorance." It was during this busy time that he painted the portrait, here reproduced, of "H.R.H. the Prince Regent," in whose favour he had risen greatly since the death of Hoppner. The extreme care in the modelling of the face is very striking, and shows at once the knowledge of the painter and his readiness to descend almost to enamel-painting in order to please. At the same time the hair is so treated as to look like wavelets of wind-swept water, just as in the portrait of "Mrs. Siddons" in the National Gallery it looks like a vegetable growth as it bursts luxuriantly from under her head-dress. Nevertheless the trick felicitously conveys the idea of flexibility and movement; the figure of the Prince, wearing the Order of the Golden Fleece which had been conferred upon him by his ally the Austrian Emperor, is brought forward almost beyond the frame by the meaningless curtain behind him, and the artist has not hesitated to record him for future generations as "the padded man that wears the stays." It is an admirable study of the "outside" of the intemperate prince.

"H.R.H. the Prince Regent"
Plate 110

Among the most important pictures in the great series in the Waterloo Gallery is that of "Pope Pius VII," which must be accounted one of Lawrence's masterpieces. Although built up out of a superfluity of detail both of feature and character, it approaches grandeur and yet fails to achieve it. Lawrence considered it "the most interesting and best head that I have painted" and that it was the best portrait ever done of the Pontiff. Seated in his State robes upon his Chair, and wearing the skull cap, the Head of the Church fills the vast canvas, and yet in spite of all the brilliant painting of the accessories it is the head alone that holds us—the finely-featured, intellectual face, worn with anxious care, and weary with all the troubles through which the Papacy had passed. Still, the full genius of the man who rose to so great a height of administration and political triumph we feel to be lacking. The companion picture—measuring like the other 104 inches by 57—the portrait of his minister, Cardinal Consalvi (otherwise Gonsalvi or Gonsalvo) is not less striking; but here we have the keen and resolute ecclesiastic and statesman,

elegant rather than impressive and yet a perfect symbol, as conceived by Lawrence, of the mighty, scheming, argus-eyed Mother Church. This is a completer thing, for the painter was not called upon to aim so high.

Even while this extraordinary series was being prepared for, Lawrence produced the "Lady Acland and her Daughters," one of those beautiful presentments of mothers and children which he so obviously enjoyed. There is his "Lady Georgiana Agar-Ellis and her Son"—she was afterwards Lady Dover—with her child climbing into her lap and looking round, clearly conscious that his portrait is being painted. The picture was engraved as "The English Mother." There is the elegant and dignified "Countess Gower and Daughter" and the circular "Countess Grey and Children"—all of them fine individualistic creations of their kind, but in all of them the children are too self-consciously posed; while the beautiful mothers, all scented and oiled, puffed and velveted, charming, high-minded, virtuous, gravely animated, and sweetly chastened, remind us in their brilliancy of what someone said of Lawrence, that "the blandishments of his pencil were only equalled by those of his tongue."

When once we admit Lawrence's convention in the treatment of children and waive our demand that like Reynolds he should give us not merely children but childhood, we can be grateful for these beautiful compositions in which the sweet little creatures, crimped and dressed-up regardless of expense, or just about to be, romp or love one another with such pretty *abandon* and dainty roughness, and entwine their exquisitely drawn limbs into such charming complications. It is very beautiful, but it is not true life, galvanize as he will the happy youngsters into pleasing contortions. Even by his older children we are not always convinced, for they lack that essential of child-portraiture—of *insouciance*. His "Master Lambton," as has been said, cannot hold a candle to Hoppner's "Edwin" for naturalness and true youthful gravity. The child—the son of J. G. Lambton, afterwards the Earl of Durham, who married the elder of the two girls painted with Countess Grey—is seven years old. Clad in crimson velvet he sits on the rocks above the sea and rests his pomaded head upon his hand in a most graceful and romantic attitude, while his expression is, as it were, operatic. He is, indeed, a stage child. The affectation may not be as real as appears, for the poor little fellow was destined to be cut off before eight more years had passed, and it is possible that the beautiful boy may not have been as others are. But there is that about the picture which makes us feel that the painter was much less in sympathy with the child himself than with his proud parents' view of him. Therein, and to that extent, lies the insincerity of the painter. See his "Child with Flowers," which might almost have been painted as a companion to Hoppner's "Miss Cholmondeley," for the idea is identical, and you will realize how this mincing

"Master Lambton" Plate 111

bit of self-consciousness, with her ribbons and laces and trimmings, is no more than a rather repulsive exhibition of an *enfant terrible's* affectations, and is an open libel on English babyhood. It was such pictures as this that called forth the hard saying, that "Lawrence made his sitters coxcombs because his sitters had made a coxcomb of him."

It is a relief to turn from artificialities such as this to the simple portraits of beautiful girls and women when no special glitter and no grand display of the upholstery on which he would too often insist in his largest pictures, were demanded or expected of him. There is the "Georgiana Lennox, Countess Bathurst," facing the spectator and sitting in a landscape sewing. She is in white with a white ribbon in her powdered hair—an exceptionally fine study of white and cool tones, and a charming unaffected thing. There is the "Lady Lyndhurst," the very type of good breeding, with her quiet dignity of pose and sweet gravity of expression, the "Miss Macdonald," and "Countess Grosvenor"—all of them eloquent of perfect ladylikeness, and all delightful examples of correct yet sympathetic draughtsmanship. These were painted for the most part in the twenties, when Lawrence's early freshness had been exchanged for a facile and learned sophistication which is unquestionably accomplished in the highest degree. The polite painter's portraits of women, we are always conscious, are eminently proper. In all he seems to be saying—"Mind, I only admire you, I do not love you. I wish you clearly to understand that. To me, Madam, you are only a sitter, and I am your very humble servant, who always has in mind that affidavit he foolishly swore in the matter of her Royal Highness. The 'Ars Amandi' I never read; my daily pabulum is the 'Manual of Etiquette.'"

In 1827 appeared the portrait of the beautiful "Miss Croker"—the fair Rosamond whose loveliness turned so many heads but whose good sense and quiet modesty saw only in her beauty a spur to humility and piety. She was Rosamond Pennell, the adopted daughter of her aunt, Mrs. John Wilson Croker, and she married Sir George Barrow, C.M.G., of Ulverston in 1832, and after a life of good works died, the last survivor of Lawrence's sitters, as late as 1906 at the age of ninety-six. The freshness of youth, the ineffable expression of combined sweetness and fun, are perfectly rendered and the colour is fuller and stronger than usual but very restrained in scale. And yet there is no depth in it; the eyes sparkle and the lips smile at us, but we cannot escape the feeling that they are lying on the surface of the canvas. For a curious contrast we may look to the portrait of "Mrs. Hicks," in the collection of Mr. Budge of Hamburg, which is so little like Lawrence in handling and feeling that many may reject the attribution in favour of some more virile painter.

"Miss Croker" Plate 113

"Mrs. Hicks" Plate 112 (a)

Towards the end of his career, no doubt, Lawrence would occasionally brush with greater freedom, but it is rare that in his female portraits he allowed himself the comparative breadth and vigour that appear in this picture. But the greater looseness did not bring depth and quality along with it. The portrait of "Miss Caroline Fry" in the National Gallery, warmer though it is in tone and more indefinite in the shadows than many of the earlier works, is still distressingly smooth in the painting and cheap in effect. It was painted in the last year of the artist's life—along with the fine portrait of "J. J. Angerstein," the Russian merchant to whom we are indebted for our National Gallery. Here we have excellent character and beautiful workmanship and animation as well as astonishingly truthful detail, but the effect upon the spectator is not that he is looking at the man, hardly at a painting of him, but rather as if he saw him in a looking-glass with all the soul gone out of him, leaving only intelligence in its place. It is as if painted upon ivory. With much less labour the artist obtained a far finer and nobler effect in the portrait of "Benjamin West, P.R.A." It is a more appealing study than the full-length which was painted for the Prince Regent in 1811 and was exhibited at the Royal Academy ten years later on the death of the venerable President. Although in the picture belonging to Mr. Castle Smith, the modelling is not carried as far as we sometimes see, it is as searching in its forms as need be; but it is in the true and dignified sentiment, in the subtle illumination of the refined features, in the gentle, thoughtful determination of the expression, and in the quiet, easy, and dignified attitude that we recognize Lawrence at his best. For once we have from Lawrence the spark of emotion!

"Benjamin West, P.R.A." Plate 109

Such a picture is worth a hundred of his "J. P. Kemble as Hamlet" with its unhappy turning of tragedy into drama. It is not as if Lawrence could not successfully realize on canvas a tragedy player. His full-length of "Mrs. Siddons" at the National Portrait Gallery is a little ungainly perhaps, but it genuinely oppresses us with the weight of the woman's dramatic personality, whom in no sense he seeks to flatter or to show "in character." In his other portrait of the great actress in the National Gallery, there is agreeable proof of his ability in handling delicately suggestive colour. No more tender harmony could be imagined than the creamy white of the dress, against the flesh, the faded blue-grey of the waistband, and the soft pink lining to the tender green cloak. The eyes are drawn almost like Vandyck's, and here and there the contours of the figure are subtly lost. If Lawrence did not often paint like this, it is because he was seldom so attached by friendship and pathetic memories to his sitter. For Mrs. Siddons he had almost a filial affection and was moved by the sentiment of tender remorse.

One of his last pictures before he was suddenly stricken down is the

unfinished portrait of "William Wilberforce." The head, it may be thought, was regarded as finished by the painter; anyhow, he would have spoiled it had he carried it to the greater completion of the "J. J. Angerstein." The character and temperament of the aged philanthropist are well conveyed, and the spectator is almost startled by the truth of the comparatively loosely rendered details when he comes to examine them—the characteristic form and expression of the eyes and the lower lip. This plate is otherwise interesting in showing how the artist proceeded in his rapid and accurate sketching-in and then turned without hesitation to the final painting. Even in this rough outlining the artist has touched in the hand so deftly that he has given it a character that harmonizes completely with the head.

"William Wilberforce" Plate 112 (b)

Of all these pictures the portrait of West is that which seems to me to reach the highest level. Even in the fine "Lord Castlereagh," with its beautiful painting and its individuality and life, the mind is lacking. In the "West" it is not; and there is soul. To Lawrence's chronic indifference to the higher mental qualities, once he had secured likeness and expression, is due the position he occupies and must always occupy in the estimation of the true connoisseur. Perfect taste and concentration in detail are not enough; and we felt no more satisfied, whatever our individual admiration might be, after examining the collection of Lawrence's pictures at the Royal Academy Old Masters in 1904, than we feel after we come away from a display of fireworks. We have little but a recollection of brilliancy and wonder to bring away with us. We may rejoice in his brilliant merits and unprecedented skill and charm, and marvel at individual examples of his genius; but when we judge them all together we are irritated rather that all this heaven-born ability, all this natural gift for grace and elegance such as no English painter ever before possessed, did not serve to lead the painter higher. "He has come into his own" wrote Redgrave nearly half-a-century ago. He seems, since then, to have come into a good deal more than his own. In any case, he marked the downward grade from Hogarth and Reynolds in the art of painting; and through all his career his successes seem to be the result of the doses of tonic and pick-me-ups daily administered to it. Portraiture was already suffering from anæmia when Lawrence arose. When he died his influence, personal as it was, evaporated, and the art languished for another thirty years and more, until a new revival awakened artists thoroughly to the serious condition that prevailed and set them agog to right the wrong.

CHAPTER VIII

FROM WILLIAM OWEN, R.A., TO J. GRAHAM GILBERT, R.S.A.

William Owen, R.A.

IT was William Owen's misfortune that he lived at a time when Lawrence, Hoppner, and Beechey divided the chief suffrages of Society, and that so strong a man as Opie challenged him for what he called "the leavings." But for that he would make a greater figure in the art history of his time, for Shee interfered with him but little. He had qualities that are lacking in most of the others. That is to say he scorned to flatter; truth to fact was his aim, and so he had to pay the price of his principles and had cause to doubt whether, after all, honesty is the best policy in portrait painting. For this reason, with few exceptions, the greater ladies of Society passed him by, and in the latter part of his career his sitters were almost exclusively male. He did not want for patronage, however, from those who cared little for decorative arrangement and insidious flattery, but looked for a straightforward rendering of face and figure, a true reading of character, and a manly vigour in the painting of them. He could render grace, nevertheless, when grace was before him, but it was commonly grace without elegance. His colour, although not remarkable, was sweet and the creaminess of his flesh tints is usually a charm in his portraits. The modelling is excellent, the drawing usually good, the likeness true, and the hands and draperies are studied as closely as the face. In Christchurch, Oxford, are five portraits of intellectual men, each one of which is a fine psychological study. One of them is shown here—the "Portrait of Cyril Jackson, D.D., F.R.S., Dean of Christchurch." In this picture all Owen's qualities may be recognized —the solid workmanship, the breadth, and the penetration of insight which are characteristic of him; and the hands are as much a true likeness as the expressive, mobile features. If we place this beside almost any of Lawrence's male portraits we recognize at once the superiority of Owen in such work,

"Dr. Cyril Jackson, F.R.S."
Plate 114

for all is understood, all is thorough, and nothing is superficial. The picture was painted in 1811, in the same year as "John Randolph, Bishop of London;" and eleven years later Owen executed the portrait of Dr. Jackson's brother William, then Bishop of Oxford. All these pictures are at Christ-church. To Owen we are indebted for valuable portrait-studies of many of the leading scholars, ecclesiastics, lawyers, and statesmen of the day, and also for one or two striking pictures of Royal personages. The artist, indeed, had been appointed Portrait-Painter to the Prince of Wales in 1810 and three years later Principal Portrait-Painter to the Prince Regent; but little came of it except honour, for other painters, as we have seen, shared the title and, broadly speaking, monopolized the commissions and the profits. Nevertheless, Owen has left behind him a great painted record of distinguished men of his day which merits our confidence for its obvious veracity and consequently has a real historical value to which some of his more celebrated rivals can lay little claim.

Sir Martin Archer Shee, P.R.A.

Martin Archer Shee, no doubt, was a more prolific painter, and during the fifty-seven years that he contributed copiously to the Royal Academy exhibitions he had on the whole a more aristocratic *clientèle*. For he had all an Irishman's charm of manner, speech, and bearing, and on the death of Lawrence he was elected to succeed him in the presidential chair. His suitability was unquestioned, but his chief claim was not his preëminence as an artist. As a painter he was more than respectable, but the meagre character of his early training in Dublin was against him. The old tradition was still rife there, and his earliest artistic impressions came to him through the descendants of the gaudy Jervas, of the Richardson and Hudson line. This, in its way, was sound enough; we see examples of it in the Garrick Club collection, and in others of the numerous theatrical portraits he painted during his earlier years in London. To this period—that is to say, to 1792—belongs the life-size full-length portrait of William Thomas Lewis as "The Marquis in 'The Midnight Hour'" now in the National Gallery—an exceptional picture for a man of twenty-three—and to the next year, "Mrs. Stephen Kemble" as Cowslip in O'Keefe's comedy, "The Agreeable Surprise." This picture, better known as "The Country Girl," has been engraved and was published a few years ago under the name of Sir Joshua Reynolds. The blunder is almost inconceivable, for there is nothing of Reynolds about it, either in sentiment, design, or execution. On the contrary, there is the artlessly devised scheme of colour, almost stereotyped to fit the public taste—the graceful pose, the neat white dress, light blue ribbon, and a red rose to enliven the whole and give quality to the flesh; the conventionally treated landscape and garden vase; and all rendered with a certain superficiality to give lightness of effect. These

"Mrs. Stephen Kemble as 'Cowslip'" Plate 115

were the ingredients of many of Shee's portraits of ladies, and it must be admitted that he used them with considerable effect. But he could rise at times to serious handling of his subject; and judged by this work Shee is deserving of very respectful consideration. Then he would give us real flesh, not the smooth, over-laboured textureless material of his later faces. In the portraits of men he would excel, but not so much in the great full-lengths—such as his "Lord Denman" in his robes, in the National Portrait Gallery, though he stands well and effectively—but rather in such pictures as were called "in character," inspired, perhaps, by his theatrical reminiscences. Such is the "General Popham" of 1814, a suggestive echo of Reynolds's "Lord Heathfield;" and much better still the portrait of J. B. S. Morritt, described by the artist as "in the costume of the Arch-Master of the Society of Dilettanti, and painted by their desire." In this portrait of the traveller and classical scholar, painted in 1832, there is a vigour and a nobility of bearing about the figure which are not often found in Shee's work. The face is sensitively and yet forcibly modelled; there is life and animation; and the equally well-drawn hands grasp the sword with an energetic and characteristic grip. Shee had joined the Society of Dilettanti two years before and been appointed its portrait-painter. These character-studies were well within his capacity, but when he came to the great State portraits, such as those of King William IV and Queen Victoria as she appeared on the throne in the House of Lords (both of them in the Royal Academy), and the William IV and Queen Adelaide at Windsor Castle, his strength would expend itself over the surface of the canvas: the task was beyond him. Among the three hundred and twenty-four pictures he exhibited at the Academy—with few exceptions all portraits—are a number which, if justice were done him, would raise his reputation far above the point at which it stands at present, for, in addition to excellence of execution and of character, there is an ease about them which is none too common in the art.

"J. B. S. Morritt" Plate 116

The conversation-piece with its several small portraits was now practically a thing of the past, but its vogue was revived in a new and special form by George Clint. After an artistically successful but unprofitable career as a miniaturist and a mezzotinter, Clint found himself thrown into the theatrical world and thereupon produced so many scenes from plays and theatrical portraits that he may be said to have preserved for us the features and chief characters of nearly every important actor and actress of his generation. The instrument of his introduction to the dramatic circle was the plate he had mezzotinted of Harlow's "Kemble Family" which was so phenomenally popular that he had to re-engrave it three times—for steel-surfacing was of course as yet unknown. With the halo of this success playing brilliantly

George Clint, A.R.A.

about his head he was welcomed by the profession and set himself to paint portraits in character and stage scenes in which the likenesses of the players were perfectly rendered, not only with spirit and vigour but with surprising artistic ability. They are numerous; they are to be found in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and other galleries, and five of them are in the Garrick Club. Of these the finest is the "A Scene from 'Lock and Key,'" a musical farce by Prince Hoare, first given at Covent Garden in 1796 and a stock piece for many years. Clint's picture is from the revival at Drury Lane in 1819 and was exhibited in 1821 and engraved in mezzotint by T. Lupton. It introduces Munden as "Old Brummagem," E. Knight as "Ralph," Mrs. Orger as "Fanny," and Miss Cubitt as "Laura," and is remarkable for the manner in which the artist has caught the over-emphasized gestures and facial expression of the chief actors and for the able and, in some passages, truly exquisite rendering of costumes and accessories. So well has he understood his work that he does not for a moment allow us to consider the scene an incident of real life; it is as unmistakably a stage play as if the artist had painted the row of candles or footlights in the foreground of the picture. This amusing work was accounted so excellent that on its exhibition it straightway carried the painter into the Royal Academy and brought him a commission for what was called a companion-picture, the last scene in Massinger's "New Way to Pay Old Debts"—also in the possession of the Garrick Club—with fourteen interesting portraits in it, including those of the artist and his engraver Lupton. Far more elaborate and much larger than "Lock and Key," and extremely successful in its way, capital in composition and colour, it is less incisive in its handling and more "*flou*" in effect, but a remarkable production notwithstanding. Pictures such as these necessarily partake of the character of *genre*, yet they cannot be considered otherwise than as portrait groups; and it is no exaggeration to say that a very fair history of the stage in the early part of the nineteenth century might be written from Clint's pictures alone. And if we were to add to them the similar but less artistic character portraits by Samuel De Wilde (of which the Garrick Club alone owns no fewer than eighty-seven) we should approach very closely to completeness.

"A Scene from 'Lock and Key'" Plate 117

While Clint, with only occasional lapses into weakness, was proving himself a brilliant successor to Zoffany in the rendering of such scenes smaller than life, he equally challenged him in full-sized portraits. Such is his "Joseph S. Munden," in the National Portrait Gallery, whose likeness may be traced in the picture already discussed. It was painted in the same year and represents the great comedian as the years were thickening upon him; and while we recognize in it serious defects of summariness and incompleteness we must credit the painter with reticence and artistic restraint—especially when we

"Joseph S. Munden" Plate 118

compare with it the intensified expression and animation of the player in character. Like the actor, Clint could put off his stage paint when he left the footlights behind him. In his own line he was undoubtedly one of the ablest artists of his time, and it was greatly regretted when, impatient and angered at being kept waiting for fifteen years for promotion to full membership while others were passed over his head, he withdrew his name from the roll of the Royal Academy, and settled down to a state of open and bitter hostility.

Had Clint aimed higher he would probably have received speedier recognition from his brethren. For one thing he was too versatile; for another, *genre*-portraiture was not held in the highest esteem. From this view we can hardly dissent, for *genre* of this character and executed in this spirit, however admirably it may be carried out, affords few opportunities for the display of the highest qualities, artistic and psychological, of the portrait-painter. For this reason he was easily out-distanced by Thomas Phillips, who was not more skilful with the brush, and yet by reason of his facile gift for portraiture as ordinarily understood obtained the serious consideration that was denied to Clint. The prolific Phillips exhibited at the Royal Academy even a greater number of portraits than the copious Shee—three hundred and forty-one against the latter's three hundred and twenty-four. He was first employed by West, as Mather Brown had been; but he stood on a higher level. Mather Brown, an American by birth, was a capital painter of "history-pictures," such as the rather fine scene from "The Gamester" at the Garrick Club—a large and forcible composition. But when he came to portraiture the test was too strong for Brown. It is true that the King patronized him and sat to him; but the Royal favour was powerless to inspire the ambitious artist with genius. Phillips was possessed of finer qualities—simplicity of conception, truth of realization, solidity in execution, conscientiousness of finish that was never pushed too far. He was a good draughtsman and would seize every opportunity that presented itself of proving it. At one time he was moved to imitate Romney's style of colour in portraiture, with his freshness of the flesh and redness of the shadows, and, as we are reminded, he did not depend on tone or glaze for power. In 1806 the Prince of Wales was painted by Phillips, and the Stafford family befriended him through life. A weaker man than Lawrence he could not grapple successfully with the oily curls and high waists that fashion ordained for women; for his best work, therefore, we must turn to his male portraits, many of which are at Oxford. A good example is the likeness of William Hart Coleridge at Christchurch, which is interesting further as the portrait of the first Colonial bishop. Among Phillips's best studies of old age is the portrait of "Sir William Alexander"—of course, with a red curtain

Thomas Phillips, R.A.

behind him—in Lord Bathurst's collection. We owe to Phillips a debt of gratitude for the ably painted records he has left us of the literary and scientific celebrities of his time; wherefore he has been called the painter of the heroes of intellect. One of the most famous of Byron's portraits is his—that showing the poet in Greek dress; and he painted as well Scott, Blake, Coleridge, Crabbe, and many other poets and writers, and Napoleon, too, "partly by stealth, but with the connivance of Josephine, and partly from memory." His style has much in common with that of Lawrence in his more serious mood. He was a competent craftsman possessed of no clearly marked personality or distinction as a colourist, but he had the happy gift of selecting his sitter's most amiable and pleasant aspect without flattery or insincerity. These qualities are amply sufficient to account for the large measure of success which Phillips enjoyed in spite of the preference of the Court and the fashionable world for Lawrence, Beechey, and Shee.

At this time there were many who were practising as portrait-painters and who, in that capacity, were of importance in their day—not only men still honoured in that line but who are now, like Thomas Barker of Bath (whose portrait of himself is a strong, sound piece of work), esteemed preëminently for their work in landscape or in figure-painting. But not a few there were who made a solid reputation long since faded away except in the memory of the few. Such a man was A. W. Devis. He was a busy portrait-painter, usually weak, gentle, and amiable, whose vicious virtues may be seen concentrated in his "Portrait of Queen Caroline," especially in that egregious piece of sentimentality, "Apotheosis of the Princess Charlotte." This ambitious, futile production aims at being a *pasticcio* of one of Murillo's "Assumptions of the Virgin" and deserves no higher destiny, for all its draughtsman's cleverness, than the decoration of a handkerchief box, to which it might aspire were it small enough. Devis was lucky in his engravers, and Charles Turner in this case has saved the picture from the oblivion to which it would have been kinder to consign it. Yet another painter was J. W. Chandler, of whose life and history little is known save that he was a natural son of Lord Warwick and exhibited for three years at the Royal Academy—between 1787 and 1791—and finally settled in Edinburgh and died mentally deranged. His work must have considerable talent for his few known pictures show undoubted facility and have proved him a good head-painter. The figure, arms, and hands, however, generally proved too much for him. A good example of his portraiture, here reproduced as a type of the work of which I have been speaking, is the "Portrait of Mrs. Franklin" formerly in the collection of Sir W. Cuthbert Quilter. It is sufficiently like the work of Hoppner, whom Chandler followed, to illustrate why his best pictures are commonly attributed to the better-known

A. W. Devis

J. W. Chandler

"Mrs. Franklin" Plate 119

man. At the same time the details of the technique, especially in the eyes and in the upper portion of the face, should be enough to prevent any real confusion between the work of the two painters. The head is a little stiff and hard, and the drapery inexpressibly clumsy; but the vigour and manner of presentation are such that the portrait in all probability would at once recommend itself to the careless observer as the work of Hoppner.

Richard Wilson and Barker of Bath were not the only landscape-painters of their day who made excursions into the field of portraiture. Turner, Constable, and Linnell tried their luck in it, the latter alone achieving success. J. M. W. Turner would find no mention here—for portraiture has an insignificant share in the stupendous life-work of the painter—were there not evidence that in his early years he intended to follow the art more or less seriously. I well remember his portrait of himself as a lad, as it hung on Professor Ruskin's wall in Brantwood—a clever, promising, and yet half-accomplished thing, which proved some skill in what the Irish maiden called the landscape of his face. There is more mastery in his portrait of a later date, stated in the catalogue of the National Gallery to have been painted about the year 1802 but more probably executed a few years earlier when the painter was, roughly, about twenty or twenty-two years of age. There is already an ease in the painting of the head, with its well-defined planes, and its deliberate shadows, as well as the simplicity and strength of the well-composed linen and garments which augured well for the future. It is interesting to observe that there is here a slight cast in the eye which exactly corresponds with that in the portrait of the artist when a boy attributed to Hoppner and now in the possession of Sir Isidore Spielmann. There are records of other portraits by Turner, as well as of his having obtained Reynolds's permission to copy some of his pictures, the study of which accounts for the strength in the portraits painted in his youth. Had he continued, to what a height, we may well wonder, might he not have attained as a portrait-painter?

J. M. W. Turner, R.A.

"J. M. W. Turner, R.A." by Himself Plate 120

With John Constable it is another matter. Portrait-painting threatened from the first to become his unwelcome destiny. It was obtruded upon him by his friends; it seemed ordained by the course of bad luck that followed him in his attempts to woo success in landscape-painting, the art which was his overpowering passion. He must have begun early, for he could have been scarcely more than twenty-two when he painted the portrait of his father, Golding Constable, which was formerly in the collection of Sir Cuthbert Quilter. The *aplomb* with which the figure is set up and the man himself, with his decisive character and firm yet amiable expression, realized boldly on the canvas, proclaims an equal decision as well as a natural insight in the painter himself. The brush is a little hesitating, and evidently has not yet

John Constable, R.A.

"Golding Constable" Plate 121

discovered and adopted any recipes for painting a head. Yet in spite of the inexperience revealed, we feel that we have here the makings of a strong and successful portrait-painter, with some endowments of originality. It is far superior to his portrait of his brother Abram, which is lacking in depth and colour, and in a measure of drawing as well. Yet in the squareness of the brushwork there is a vigour which is not to be found in the accepted portraiture of many of his contemporaries. He also painted a group of his sisters Ann and Mary which shows imagination and some sense of arrangement, but little taste. In short, as in the pencil likeness of himself in the National Portrait Gallery, there is in all save the portrait of his father a certain common-placeness from which he would have had to free himself. That he would have done so there is little doubt, for it is plain that he had no mind to smooth his way by adopting the facile conventions that provided the short cut to popular favour, but based himself upon personal observation. He had, too, a knowledge of construction and could model a face well; but he would sometimes show a considerable falling off, as in the ill-drawn and woolly "James Lloyd," executed in December, 1806, at about the same time as other portraits of the Lloyd family. Even as late as 1811, when Constable was thirty-five years of age and had given ample proof of his genius for landscape, his father and his friends were urging him to abandon a branch of art which the public could not or at any rate did not appreciate, and turn his attention wholly to portraiture. To this advice he lent a half-willing ear, for we know that the following year he was employed by Lady Louisa Manners, and at the same time was painting the portraits of Mr. Watts and the Bishop of Salisbury. The latter was so successful that a replica of it was commissioned for Exeter Palace. Then followed portraits of Lady Heathcote and her mother, and another of the Rev. George Bridgman, brother of Lord Bradford. Of this Constable himself declared that "it far excels any of my former attempts that way." At that time his charge for a head was fifteen guineas. Then in 1816 Constable married Miss Bicknell, with whom he had fallen deeply in love, and in that year, in the Royal Academy of 1817, appeared his last portrait—his "Rev. J. Fisher" which curiously enough is the only picture of its class he ever exhibited. Thereafter landscape claimed him exclusively and, like Wilson, he forswore portrait-painting to the end of his days.

By Constable's withdrawal more room was made for the clever but far less distinguished little crowd of portrait-painters of whom Shee and Phillips were among the chiefs, and Lonsdale and Pickersgill were of the rank and file, but not much below them. James Lonsdale had been Romney's pupil, but in his art he was a follower of Lawrence whose novel manner and superficial brilliancy had naturally infected the younger members of the school.

James Lonsdale

Like Lawrence he was often very precise and sometimes hard in his drawing, and as he advanced he sought to improve upon the master's landscape backgrounds by painting in little scenes in the early morning light and so securing a freshness impossible under his old scheme of red sofas or curtains against which his black-coated men should stand out. Many of the most eminent persons of his day sat to him, especially after he was appointed Portrait-painter to the Duke of Sussex; but ladies preferred to patronize any of the others who were more prone than Lonsdale to flattery. He was bold and natural in his rendering of his sitters; he could be picturesque if the case demanded, as in his "Talma as Hamlet" (in the Royal Academy of 1818) or severe and searching, as in the fine study of "Dr. Henry Bathurst, Bishop of Norwich"—a three-quarter length now at Cirencester. In this picture the head is quite excellent in expression and character, and the pose of the old bewigged ecclesiastic easy and unaffected; but as is so often found in painters of Lonsdale's class, the hands are not so good. They are carelessly studied and are a blot upon the portrait. From time to time we come across a portrait by Lonsdale which makes us wonder why he is not more honoured at the present day, for his highest level of attainment unquestionably deserves a wider acknowledgment than it has received.

John Jackson, R.A.

If this is true of Lonsdale it is doubly true of John Jackson. Here is a man whom Lawrence held in the highest esteem and whose portrait of Flaxman, painted in 1827, he declared "a great achievement of the English school, and a picture of which Vandyck might have felt proud to call himself the author," and whose portrait of Canova (1819) Chantrey spoke of as "one of the finest specimens of true character and true colour in modern portraiture." Even allowing for the generous enthusiasm of Jackson's artist friends, can we doubt that his talent in portrait-painting was altogether exceptional? Yet who nowadays will give an exceptional price in order to include a portrait by Jackson in his collection? He was not only clever but was possessed of independence of outlook and individuality. Moreover, he was a fine colourist, and his brush was facile and vigorous, but light when occasion demanded. Jackson had been brought up in a good school. He had copied some of Reynolds's works so admirably as closely to approach the originals for subdued richness of colour and for character—such, for example, as the "John Hunter" in the National Portrait Gallery. His original work exhibited the same qualities, but Jackson failed, relatively, in this, that his men often lack the intellectuality and life-spark of Reynolds and his women the grace and charm of Lawrence. At the same time he was never meretricious; and even though his flesh-painting was now and then poor and his draperies careless, the lapse was comparatively rare. Jackson was an excellent painter of a head, and when

he abandoned the trick of the red curtain or sofa beloved of Hoppner, Lawrence, and Wilkie, would arrange a portrait capitally on the canvas. That he was not without appreciation of feminine charm is seen in his portrait, painted in 1822, of "Catherine Stephens," the operatic singer, who afterwards became the Countess of Essex. In the head there is a good deal of Lawrence's style, though Lawrence would never have been guilty of the ill-drawn mouth—an exceptional slip, but the hands and details of the dress bear witness to the painter's study of Reynolds. Jackson's portrait of "James Northcote, R.A.," in the National Gallery, painted in 1821, is a fine example of Jackson's handling of character; so, too, is his portrait of himself (1818) in the National Portrait Gallery. Into his portraits of his fellow members of the Royal Academy, a number of the more distinguished of whom he painted, he put much of that sympathy which rendered him extremely popular with all with whom he associated. His facility was amazing: it is said that for a bet he once began and finished five portraits in a single day. What the quality of them must have been we need not consider; but we know that Jackson took his art very seriously and has won a prominent place among the artists of his day and country.

"Catherine, Countess of Essex" Plate 122

H. W. Pickersgill, R.A.

One of his rivals, who disturbed him but little, was H. W. Pickersgill, who during his long life exhibited more than twice as many portraits as he to the Royal Academy exhibitions—some three hundred and seventy of them. When Phillips's career came to an end Pickersgill stepped into his practice and almost monopolized what before he had only meagrely enjoyed, the painting of Society people. Beginning, as so many before him had done, with portraits of theatrical celebrities—as if that were an unfailing method of attracting public attention, artists not being blind to the sweet uses of advertisement—he gradually came to paint the most distinguished and aristocratic classes in the land, mainly but not entirely devoting himself to the portraits of men. His likenesses were good, but artistically considered the pictures do not stand on a high plane, "respectable" though they are. It is a depressing commentary on popular taste that one who was so little above mediocrity should receive wide-spread encouragement while the capabilities of better artists should have passed relatively unnoticed.

Since Raeburn no Scotsman who had won prominence had devoted himself to portraiture. But no fewer than five were now to assert themselves—a solid little phalanx, who with a couple of Englishmen bring to a close the story of portrait-painting in the eighteenth century and the opening decades of the nineteenth. Sir William Allan can scarcely indeed be counted among the portraitists. His energies were devoted to historical and orientalist paintings, and such portraits as he painted were produced either for a bare

Sir William Allan, R.A., P.R.S.A.

livelihood—like those which he executed during his sojourn in Russia—or for friendship's sake (not, however, excluding all thoughts of profit) like those which he painted of Sir Walter Scott, his staunch and generous supporter when most he needed one. Scott's taste in art, no doubt, was not sound, nor his knowledge very technical or profound. Raeburn, he complained, had "twice made a Chowder-headed person" of him, and so he strongly recommended the Duke of Buccleuch to employ in preference William Allan, of whose portraits he spoke in terms of the highest praise. Scott was honest, of course, in his opinion; and he employed Allan to paint his, the novelist's, son for the library at Abbotsford. It is natural enough that a *genre* and historical painter such as Allan would prefer to make his portraits small in size and present them, in the manner of Hayman and Hogarth, Zoffany and Clint, in interiors in the *genre* manner. It was the conversation-piece once more. The small portrait of Sir Walter Scott in the National Portrait Gallery comes as near to a subject-picture as the artist could make it. Its literary interest is nearly as great as the personal, for the great Wizard is represented sitting in his study—with his collie dog Maida at his feet and his lares and penates about him—reading, we are informed, the Proclamation of Mary Queen of Scots previous to her marriage with Darnley. The arrangement is ingenious, for the reflected light from the document cast back into the face annihilates the shadows for the most part and illuminates a countenance marked by subtle expression. Owing to the use of bituminous pigment the condition of the picture is very bad in the shadowed portion, but the general tone is sufficiently well-preserved to bear witness to the artist's subtle colour-sense and keenness of observation. This portrait, which was painted for R. Nasmyth, F.R.S., is the last for which Scott sat and was exhibited at the Royal Academy within a few months of his death. Allan is here immeasurably far from his great compatriot Raeburn the spell of whose influence he seems wholly to have escaped. He inclines more towards Wilkie—on whose death he was appointed, in 1842, Queen's Limner for Scotland and was knighted on the occasion. But his time was now short and his work unimportant; but one of his last exhibited works, it may be noted, was another of his rare examples of portraiture.

"Sir Walter Scott, Bart." Plate 123

On the other hand, Allan's fellow-student, David Wilkie, was entirely at his ease in the painting of portraits, in any size, from the miniature to the regal State full-length. It is only the enormous popularity he achieved through his anecdotal subject-pictures which has made the public forget that he was Painter-in-Ordinary to three successive sovereigns and King's Limner in Scotland, in which capacities he produced an important series of portraits and ceremonial groups which, with his other known pictures of the same class, number sixty and more. Among his earlier work is his likeness of himself in

Sir David Wilkie, R.A.

"Sir David Wilkie, R.A." by Himself Plate 124

the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. The excellence of this portrait is very marked. It has the breadth and simplicity of Raeburn with admirable expression and effect of illumination. The perfection of drawing in the head is also extended in a measure to the hands which, in spite of the inordinate length of the fingers do not suffer from the extreme care bestowed upon them. This is by far the most satisfactory of the auto-portraits which he executed so far as the head is concerned—the development of the back and of the arm is less easily explained. Later on, when the glow of fine colour became a passion with him, Wilkie's touch became freer and his flesh tints too become loaded. Many of his life-size portraits have become ruined by persistence in the use of asphaltum either as pigment or varnish; but his "Lord Melville," in the University of St. Andrews, and his "Earl of Kellie" in the County Hall of Cupar, both of them seated ceremonial canvases, perhaps the finest of all his portraits, establish his eminence once for all in this branch of art. His more hastily executed portraits, such as the "Washington Irving," done at Seville in 1828, are remarkable for the purity and delicacy of the colour which seems to have been floated on with fluent ease and unconscious dexterity. Even the carelessness of handling, which we sometimes see, we may forgive by reason of his management of colour. Of all the State and other portraits—including those of King William IV and Queen Adelaide—not one, so far as I know, can compare for character, expression, and tone with those of Lords Melville and Kellie. As a *tour de force* the "Queen Victoria presiding at her First Council" in Kensington Palace is the most surprising, for it successfully solves one of the most difficult problems presented to the painter of ceremonial pictures, and the likenesses are excellent. Wilkie had painted Queen Victoria years before in the charming picture which is little more than a sketch, "Princess Victoria and the Duchess of Kent," and he represented her again on other occasions with all the charm which, he tells us, had so fascinated him while he was painting her. It is unnecessary to enlarge on the three or more different styles of handling and of colour which characterize Wilkie during his career, for his essential outlook on portraiture never seemed to have changed, however radically he altered his views on the theory of painting and of art. Minute finish might give way to looseness of handling, much as it did in the case of Gainsborough; but his attitude *vis-à-vis* the sitter remained practically the same from first to last. His portraits, large and small, always have dignity in presentation and a certain big sense of design; at the same time there is often a thinness about them, especially in his larger canvases—that lack of solidity or wiriness which we also find in Lawrence—that detracts from their merit. His technique and the size of his brushes do not seem to increase with the size of his canvas, and a certain poverty of effect and loss of depth are the

result. In his later work, done after his return from Spain, we are made to feel that in his portraiture Wilkie was affected but little by Velazquez, but was not insusceptible to the influence of Goya and, in his figures, of Murillo; and, further, that what he gained in freedom of hand and breadth of view, he lost, in the opinion of many, in firmness and richness of result and in quiet unaffectedness of execution. But in spite of everything, we appreciate in Wilkie a fine, original, and independent master, whose hand was controlled by a keen and powerful intellect.

George H. Harlow

More superficial than Wilkie, more facile and showy, George Henry Harlow succeeded, nevertheless, during his short life of thirty-two years in achieving a strong position as a portrait painter. He was already well trained in all but draughtsmanship when he entered the studio of Sir Thomas Lawrence whose manner he adopted with comparative ease. Indeed, it is said that when he quarrelled with his master and left him, in a spirit of Puck-like revenge, he painted a sign-board in the great man's style so well that when "the quality" drove down—as was the fashionable custom—to Richmond or Kew they saw this excellent imitation signed "T. L." projecting from an inn over the road-way. The trick, naturally enough, caused Lawrence not a little annoyance, not merely because it suggested that he was coming down in the world, but because it seemed to be a sly and treacherous reflection on what had been for some years his father's trade. The clever slickness and rather blatant display of brushwork which we often find in Harlow were merely Lawrence "run to seed." Harlow's talent was very considerable, notwithstanding, but the artist preferred the easier way, and it is doubtful whether had he lived he would ever have risen to the height which many had predicted for him. His facility in execution, his sense of prettiness and of fun, and especially the Lawrence influence, can be seen in his group of "Mrs. Hopwood and Family," formerly in Sir Cuthbert Quilter's collection. Not only the style, but the composition of the crowded children and their attitudes, are all Lawrence at his second or third best. When working with him Harlow received a pound a week "to prepare his pictures in dead colour and advance copies for him to work upon;" it is to be expected, therefore, that in the early years of his career we should find the imitation strongly marked as in this picture, which has heretofore incorrectly been known as "The Kemble Family." The real "Kemble Family," of course, is the large picture which was exhibited in 1817 under the title of "The Court for the trial of Queen Catherine," for which, by the way, he only required a single sitting "from the accomplished action." For the more serious work which he produced we must turn to his men's portraits, especially those of his fellow artists, such as those of "Benjamin West, P.R.A.," "Sir W. Beechey, R.A.," and "James Northcote, R.A.," now in the National

"Mrs. Hopwood and Family" Plate 125

"James Northcote, R.A." Plate 126

Portrait Gallery. Here we have none of his mannerisms, his flashiness, or his shallowness, but a really fine study of character, with the man's whole psychology revealed as completely as the animation and concentration peculiar to him: his shrewdness, his saturnine humour, his quickness, his miserliness. We see in the hands and figure as well as in the face the Northcote who was painted so often but never with more incisive or more remorseless truth than here. Here Harlow was himself and "for all time;" in his pretty portraits of women and children he was merely of "the age," painting in the flaccid decorative spirit of the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth.

Andrew Geddes, A.R.A

Brilliant though he was, Harlow had not, like Andrew Geddes, the true artistic feeling and perception. Geddes, who received his training in the Royal Academy schools and passed a few years in Italy, settled and painted for a time in Edinburgh; but his chief life-work was executed in London. At one period he made a speciality of small half-lengths of sitters in their own homes; of such his picture of Andrew Plimer, the miniaturist, at the age of fifty-two (he looks much older here, however) is a very fine example, subtle in its illumination and its greys and flesh-tones. Then he passed into a phase of mastery which is not sufficiently acknowledged at the present day. His life-size portraits not only realize character with ease and largeness of understanding, with a distinguished sense of colour and of light and shade, but they reveal a painter-like quality only too rare at this period in the British school. His portrait of Anthony Stewart, the miniature painter, has not all the decision in draughtsmanship, especially about the eyes, which we are accustomed to find in his best work, but the air of the whole thing, with its fine expression and quiet forcefulness, proclaims a painter of uncommon power. When we come to the "Portrait of Sir Walter Scott," painted in 1818, we feel that we are in the presence of a masterpiece, for the character and the likeness are conveyed in a few simple, authoritative touches which are extraordinarily convincing, although the picture is little more than a sketch. Quieter in handling but not less striking is the fine portrait of the artist's mother, now in the National Gallery of Scotland. We always expect that an artist's portrait of his mother more than of any other living soul will overflow with sympathy and show him at his sincerest and his best; and we are seldom disappointed. But here in this picture—which might almost entitle Geddes to be considered the Scottish Rembrandt—we have not sympathy, love, and insight only, but an elevation of conception and a painter-like breadth of execution which raise the picture to the highest level of the artist's achievement, beside if not above the far more "important" portrait of William Anderson which created so great a sensation at the Scottish National Exhibition of 1908. That magnificent work

"Andrew Plimer" Plate 128

"Anthony Stewart" Plate 127

"The Artist's Mother" Plate 129

is even more "modern" in the almost nervous expressiveness of the brushwork and the fusing of the tones. His portrait of the Duke of York, George IV declared to be the best that was ever painted of his brother; and other works might be cited as evidence of the exceptional ability of Andrew Geddes. In these pictures we note a very personal treatment of the eyes and a bold characteristic modelling of the mouth. Geddes, as we have seen, could deal with his subjects with masterly breadth, yet sometimes he would delight in the exquisite elaboration of details. But whether he is painting his excellent portraits of children, of men, or of women, whether he is indulging more than we care for in reds and lakes for his backgounds, or giving us instead charming bits of landscape, or treating his figure-subjects dramatically, we are always conscious of his rare feeling for surface beauty and quality of paint. For that reason Geddes will always be esteemed and will rise higher in his position among the elect.

Sir John Watson Gordon, R.A., P.R.S.A.

His senior by two years John Watson Gordon was destined to take a loftier social position and to win a wider public success. Nor can it be said that he was unworthy of the distinction which he achieved. On the death of Raeburn he succeeded to his practice, almost to his monopoly, and painted most of the leading men of Edinburgh; but at this time, although he was a member of the new Royal Scottish Academy, which he helped to found, his talent had not yet fully developed. He then began to exhibit at the Royal Academy of London and in 1841 was elected an Associate and in 1850 a full member of the body, and in the same year became President of the Scottish Academy, was appointed Queen's Limner for Scotland and received the honour of knighthood. The work which justified this shower of distinctions was of very real and solid if not of extraordinary merit. His earlier portraits closely imitated those of Raeburn: indeed, his "Dr. Andrew Duncan," which he painted in 1825 for the Edinburgh Royal Medical Society passed for many years, and until lately, as the work of that master. But this phase soon gave way to an individual and personal style. His portrait of "Robin Gray, Provost of Peterhead" and his fine "David Cox" in the Birmingham Art Gallery showed of what he was capable. He adhered to his firm characteristic brush-work, which was virile and masterly, and produced portraits which could be mistaken for the work of no one else and which will always do honour to the British school of portraiture. As successor to Raeburn Gordon may be said to be the true forerunner of that great Scottish school which has produced such distinguished artists as Sir George Reid and Sir James Guthrie. He usually concentrated his attention on the heads of his sitters and was at his best in depicting men of mature age, of pronounced intellectuality and strong expression. The powerful colour which had marked his work at his first and early middle period he

exchanged later on for a greatly restricted palette, with schemes of greys and black as the dominant note. Severity of this kind is mainly applicable to male portraiture, but it suited Gordon's art very well, for he seems himself to have recognized that feminine grace and the innocent charm of childhood did not lie within the limits of his peculiar abilities. Subtlety he had, but lacking as he did the greater delicacy of touch and colour needed for the successful rendering of ladies and their little ones, he wisely confined himself to the sterner half of humanity. Among the last portraits from Gordon's brush was that of King Edward, in the year 1862.

John Linnell

The last of the Englishmen to whose work attention is here drawn is John Linnell, the landscape painter. Unlike Turner and Constable, whose portrait-painting was a mere incident in their career, Linnell was prolific in that section of the art until he was fifty-eight years of age—that is to say, until the year 1850. He painted so many portraits—small, for the most part, and quickly done—that his biographer declares them "uncountable," though he catalogues only eighty-eight, a number of which consist of family groups. Many of his portraits were small in size, and besides these he produced a large number of drawings and miniatures. Indeed, after his first commission from the Marchioness of Stafford, Linnell became the favourite miniature-painter of society, at a time when this delicate art was fast sinking from the high position it had hitherto held. And yet although up to the year 1847 the majority of his contributions to the Royal Academy were portraits, Linnell is remembered almost exclusively as a painter of landscape.

"Sir Robert Peel, Bart." Plate 130

His life-size oil portraits often remind us of his early devotion to the miniature. Proof of this is to be found in his "Portrait of Sir Robert Peel, Bart.," in which we find the precision, the suggestion of stippling, and the general handling, loose though it is, which we expect in the miniature. The painting is good of its kind, and yet there is a weakness of effect inherent in the manner of the execution. The colour is harmonious, for Linnell was an harmonious colourist, with a predilection however for a rich, strong chromatic scheme and with a *faible* for lake. His rather remarkable likeness of John Bray, the treasurer of the Society of Antiquaries, at the age of ninety-seven, similarly betrays the hand and eye of the miniaturist. Other portraits are treated with greater breadth, such as those of Linnell's artist friends, T. Phillips, R.A., W. Mulready, R.A., John Martin, and Sir A. W. Callcott, R.A.—the last-named especially good, and well presented. Indeed, Linnell painted a long succession of interesting people in various paths of life, notably Samuel Rogers, Spring Rice, Malthus, and, in 1844, Thomas Carlyle. The latter is shown seated in a landscape, a younger and a more sympathetic figure than that usually presented to us of the philosopher. But even here there is evidence of the eye of the miniaturist,

and, one might add of the mezzotinter—for Linnell, a versatile man of striking gifts, was particularly skilful in scraping a plate and produced a number of mezzotints after his own portraits. The sum of his work, however, other than landscape, interesting though it is and valuable as a record, is of no particular significance in the art of the day, save that it confirms the downward tendency of portrait-painting in England. The spirit of the photographer was arising.

John Graham Gilbert, R.S.A.

Scotland, however, was doing her best to maintain north of the Border the level that was declining in the south. John Graham Gilbert, friend and rival of Sir John Watson Gordon, had struck out a line of his own and has left his mark upon Scottish art. While Gordon excelled in character, Graham Gilbert surpassed his friend, and most others, in colour. A sojourn in Italy had been well employed in a study of the north Italian schools, and he had assimilated their teaching in a surprising degree, to the end that Venetian colour is the note of his work. Whether it is, as has been said of him, that he thought more of colour than of character, or whether it is that sustained effort of insight was impossible to him, it is certainly the fact that while he proved himself an amazing colourist, he had to acknowledge the supremacy of Gordon as a psychologist and a character-reader in paint. Yet in certain of his male portraits he has produced work of a very high order. His "John Gibson, R.A.," painted in 1848, is not only an admirable likeness of the sculptor; the merit of the picture lies in its technical beauties, in the sobriety and control of the fine colour-scheme, the superb illumination and subtly fused half-tones. The excellence of arrangement in his portrait of "Mr. Lawson," too, is considered less noteworthy than the sweetness and clearness of the colour. In his full-length "Sir John Watson Gordon" in the National Gallery of Scotland we have what is perhaps his masterpiece of male portraiture. The figure, attired in court dress, stands well; the solidly-modelled head exhibits not only well-grasped character but expression sympathetically rendered, and the man is well posed before an original and well-executed background. We feel that he is at Court awaiting the summons to the Presence, and we are as uncomfortable as he is. Still, the art of Graham Gilbert, his whole temperament, indeed, was more fitted for dealing with female portraiture. His paintings of ladies—which must be held to include his "fancy heads"—are very tender in sentiment, charming in grace, and delicate and refined in colour, yet solidly-painted and forceful in handling. In these qualities, indeed, he was surpassed by no countryman of his day, and it would be difficult to name one who equalled him. His portraits of Lady Southampton and of Mrs. Graham Gilbert may be mentioned together as illustrative of his different manners, equally excellent, of painting women; and among his "fancy portraits" the admirable picture called "The Love Letter," now in the possession of Lord Kingsburgh, takes

"Sir John Watson Gordon, R.A., P.R.S.A." Plate 131

a prominent place. The light coming from behind the girl (low-necked with a red corset-bodice and puffed linen sleeves) who holds before her an open letter as she faces us, offers a complicated and interesting problem of illumination which the artist has brought to a brilliant solution. In all his female portraits, indeed, Graham Gilbert shows a felicity of arrangement combined with good and agreeable colour, conscientious finish, and great technical skill. Work such as his necessarily calls for scumbles and glazes over careful underpainting; yet rarely does he lose either purity or transparency. His draughtsmanship is excellent—a merit not so common in Scotland as beauty of colour—and his taste was rarely at fault.

Not half a century has passed since Graham Gilbert died, and the record of the art of portraiture since that day is gratifying enough. Painters have multiplied; taste has altered, or at least has become diversified; and theories of art have been advanced and acted on of which the men whose work has here been storied could scarcely have foreseen. In the battle that has been waged and is still being fought out—for the day of victory of any one party and the submission of any other is not yet, nor likely ever to be—the Art of Portraiture has remained constant and in its essence not subject to any fundamental change. The love of novelty may for a time bring brutality as its dominant note; the reaction must inevitably be refinement. Ultra-realism at one period may prevail, only to give way, when the pendulum swings back to the uttermost point, to a symbolic treatment. But the rise and fall of the tides leave the waters unchanged; and the art of portraiture remains where it was in the minds and hearts of all who practise it with sincerity and devotion, and with understanding of its full significance. The public in general are apt to under-estimate its importance and, when they think at all, to accept the ancient view that it is but an instrument of record or else a stepping-stone to history-painting. Ruskin, in his "Lectures on Art" set it upon its proper pedestal in the sight of English readers:

"The highest thing that Art can do," he said, "is to set before you the true image of the presence of a noble human being. It has never done more than this, and it ought not to do less. . . . You may have much more brilliant and impressive qualities in imaginative pictures; you may have figures scattered like clouds, or garlanded like flowers; you may have light and shade, as of a tempest, and colour as of the rainbow; but all that is child's play to the great men, though it is astonishment to us. The real strength is tried to the utmost, and as far as I know, it is never elsewhere brought out so thoroughly, as in painting one man or woman, and the soul that was in them."

It is not given to every painter to paint the soul, or even to conceive

of it; and it is as much as we have the right to ask, to require of him good craftsmanship, sincerity, likeness, and grasp of character. This much we may exact, and, failing satisfaction of our demand, relegate him to the limbo of the forgotten. It is the fate that hangs over every artist, and the dread of it, and the pathos, stimulate his mind and hand—(or paralyze them, maybe, according to his temperament)—if he would escape the indifference of posterity. Those who have been named in these volumes are but representatives and leaders of the army of portraitists who have painted the history of Britain in the innumerable portraits of her people that fill the land. That they have done their work well and nobly is the verdict of the world; that that achievement is but the opening chapter in the Book of their Art not less glorious in its continuation, few of us can doubt and all of us must hope.

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF PAINTERS

EXAMPLES OF WHOSE ART ARE REPRESENTED IN THIS WORK

Unknown Master	Flourished under Richard II
Thomas Hoccleve	1370-(?) 1450
John Bettes	c. 1570
Nicholas Hilliard	1537-1619
Isaac Oliver	(?) 1556-1617
George Jamesone	(?) 1588-1644
Cornelis Janssen	1593-(?) 1664
Peter Oliver	1594-1648
Samuel Cooper	1609-1672
William Dobson	1610-1646
Robert Walker	1658
Robert Fisher	Fl. 1655
Edward Bower	Fl. under Charles I
John Michael Wright	(?) 1625-1700
John Hoskins	1664
Mary Beale	1632-1697
Thomas Flatman	1637-1688
John Riley	1646-1691
John Greenhill	(?) 1644-1676
John Taylor	Fl. 1650
Herbert Tuer	(?) 1650-(?)
William Gandy	1660-1729
Jonathan Richardson	1665-1745
Charles Jervas	1675-1739
Thomas Gibson	1680-1751
William Aikman	1682-1731

William Hogarth	1697-1764
George Knapton	1698-1778
Thomas Hudson	1701-1779
Arthur Pond	1705-1758
William Hoare, R.A.	(?)1707-1792
Francis Hayman, R.A.	1708-1776
Allan Ramsay	1713-1784
Nathaniel Hone, R.A.	1718-1784
Sir Joshua Reynolds, P.R.A.	1723-1792
Francis Cotes, R.A.	(?)1725-1770
Thomas Gainsborough, R.A.	1727-1788
Henry Morland	(?)1730-1797
Johann Zoffany, R.A.	1733-1810
George Romney	1734-1802
Joseph Wright of Derby, A.R.A.	1734-1797
Benjamin West, P.R.A.	1738-1820
Richard Cosway, R.A.	1740-1821
John Smart	1741-1811
Ozias Humphry, R.A.	1742-1810
John Russell, R.A.	1745-1806
James Northcote, R.A.	1746-1831
Francis Wheatley, R.A.	1747-1801
George Engleheart	1752-1839
Sir William Beechey, R.A.	1753-1839
Sir Henry Raeburn, R.A.	1756-1823
John Hoppner, R.A.	1758-1810
Lemuel F. Abbott	1760-1803
John Opie, R.A.	1761-1807
George Morland	1763-1804
Andrew Plimer	1763-1837
Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A.	1769-1830
William Owen, R.A.	1769-1825
Sir Martin Archer Shee, P.R.A.	1769-1850
George Clint, A.R.A.	1770-1854
John W. Chandler	1805
J. M. W. Turner, R.A.	1775-1851
John Constable, R.A.	1776-1837

John Jackson, R.A.	1778-1831
Sir William Allan, R.A., P.R.S.A.	1782-1850
Sir David Wilkie, R.A.	1785-1841
George H. Harlow	1787-1819
Andrew Geddes, A.R.A.	1789-1844
John Linnell	1792-1882
John Graham Gilbert, R.S.A.	1794-1866

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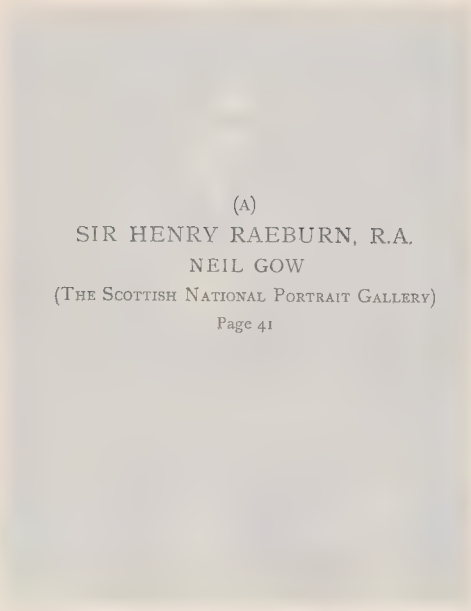

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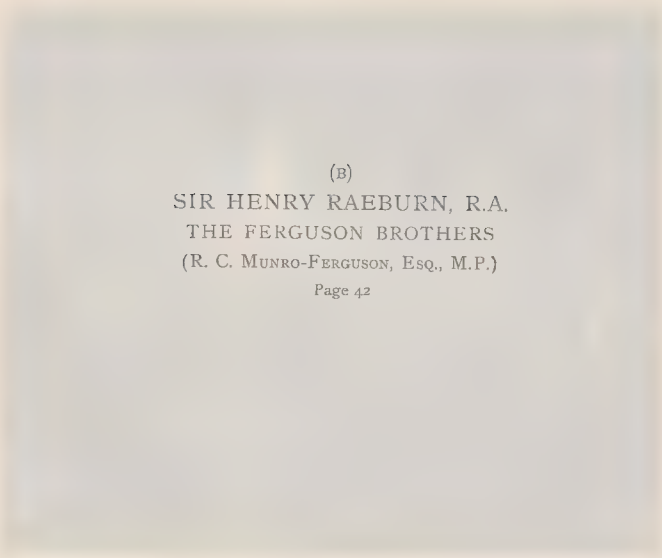

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